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ABSTRACT

Factors affecting female participation in education in seven developing countries were examined through field visits to the following countries: Bangladesh, Cameroon, India, Jamaica, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, and Vanuatu. In each country, researchers interviewed key personnel, consulted local documentation, and conducted two empirical surveys designed to ascertain the views of gender and education held by primary school pupils and women training to become primary teachers. Nine groups of factors potentially affecting female participation in education were considered: geographical, sociocultural, health, economic, religious, legal, political/administrative, educational, and initiatives. Several factors, including residence in a rural area and the health effects of poverty and malnutrition, proved to affect female participation in education much more than male participation. The near-universal fundamental cultural bias in favor of males and economic factors proved to be the biggest obstacles to female participation in education in developing countries. Religious and legal factors had only indirect effects. Significant initiatives aiming to address aspects of the problem of female participation in education were noted in all seven countries; however, the political will to implement those initiatives policies was largely lacking. (Thirty-three tables/figures and the questionnaires are included. The Seychelles case study is presented as an appendix.) (MN)

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EDUCATION RESEARCH

FACTORS AFFECTING FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION IN SEVEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(Second Edition)

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(Second Edition)

Serial No. 9
ISBN: 1 861920 65 2

Colin Brock & Nadine Cammish
Universities of Oxford and Hull
1997

Department for International Development
(formerly Overseas Development Administration)

DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION PAPERS

This is one of a series of Education Papers issued from time to time by the Education Division of the Department for International Development. Each paper represents a study or piece of commissioned research on some aspect of education and training in developing countries. Most of the studies were undertaken in order to provide informed judgements from which policy decisions could be drawn, but in each case it has become apparent that the material produced would be of interest to a wider audience, particularly but not exclusively those whose work focuses on developing countries.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

This second edition is not merely an updated version of the first, rather it is an opportunity to bring our original study to a wider audience - in response to significant demand since 1991 - and to enlarge the publication in two respects.

First, one of us has had the opportunity to replicate the study in a seventh location: the Seychelles, this means that the Indian Ocean is represented alongside the Caribbean and the South Pacific and some additional perspectives are observed. However, since half a decade had elapsed between the original study and the undertaking of the Seychelles fieldwork, it would not be proper to interpret this 1996 information within the cross-cutting thematic discussion that precedes the case studies. We have therefore placed the Seychelles section as an appendix. We recognise of course that the passage of time may have rendered certain comments or observations in respect of particular issues in particular places redundant. In general though we do not feel that a great deal has changed. The problem of female disadvantage is deeply rooted and still near universal.

Secondly, this edition is being published at the same time as a second volume, a selective and partially annotated bibliography of near global proportions. Although extending far beyond the original six countries, this bibliography owes its existence to the present study and is another response to the demand apparently created by it for more bibliographical information.

We are greatly encouraged by the interest our work has generated and hope that this new resource will assist a new generation of researchers in examining an issue that lies at the very heart of development: as one prominent scholar in this field has it: "without women - no development."

CB, NKC March 1997.

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1. STATEMENT

At the request of the then Overseas Development Administration (now the Department for International Development), the Department of Education Studies and Institute of Education of the University of Hull was asked to examine the social, economic, religious and other factors influencing the degree of female participation in formal education institutions in six carefully selected developing countries. The intention behind the study was that it should provide information that governments and aid donors would be able to take account of in designing future educational projects, with a view to improving the levels of female participation in those countries where it lags behind that of males. While the study would not ignore participation in non-formal education, the main thrust would be towards broad general education at all levels, with the focus of attention at school level and an emphasis on the primary sector.

The study was to be undertaken with the agreement of the governments concerned. The researchers would also seek the cooperation of appropriate local contacts in each country selected, so that the work was a cooperative effort between the University of Hull and a number of partners overseas. The researchers would select the countries in consultation with the Overseas Development Administration and then determine for themselves the choice of partners. To maintain the comparative element in the study it would be necessary to establish a standardised methodology common to each country. The countries selected were Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Bangladesh, India, Jamaica and Vanuatu.

The General Report would be brief, drawing on and generalising from each of the country studies, which would follow. Where possible conclusions would be drawn and recommendations made that would be of use to advisers, planners and decision-makers associated with the development of educational systems. The nature of the topic required that such conclusions and recommendations took account of the sensitivities of overseas governments, especially since it was intended that the outcome should have an opinion-forming potential.

2. PREFACE

This project would not have been possible without the assistance of a considerable number of individuals, agencies and institutions, and we would wish to acknowledge our debt to each of the groups mentioned below. It is not customary in a report such as this to name individuals, but any of those who have helped us and who read this document will know that we are most grateful for the part they played in enabling this project to be carried through.

First, we would wish to thank the education advisers of ODA (now DFID) for giving us their support and advice. The opportunity to carry out this work has been a privilege and we do of course take full responsibility for the outcome as described below. We would also wish to thank colleagues at the University of Hull for their help in various ways, not only in the School of Education, but also in the Department of Politics, Language Centre and Central Administration.

In all the locations involved government officials cooperated most constructively with our request for interviews, information and visits. The staff and students in all the primary schools and teachers' colleges were likewise tremendously helpful and hospitable. We are indeed most grateful to them all, as well as to the professionals and helpers in non-governmental agencies, universities and research institutes with whom we had contact. In most of the locations the staff of the British Council and/or British High Commission were approached for their advice and assistance which always proved a significant enabling factor, and we thank them too.

We owe a very special debt to those who acted as our local advisers in each of the locations involved. Without their untiring efforts on our behalf we could not have carried through the busy survey and interview schedules that provided the valuable and necessary local input to this project. We are deeply indebted to each and every one of them.

Finally, there are two individuals we must thank by name in view of their personal input to the project team. They are Dr David Smawfield, who compiled the background bibliography and assisted with one of the field visits and, Mrs Jenny Webster our project secretary throughout, and who also typed the final draft report.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

This project was carried out in three phases:

a. documentary research and field visit planning;
b. six field study visits (one in 1989 and five in 1990);
c. analysis of information gathered and compilation of report.

The period involved was from June 1989 to December 1990, inclusive, during which the researchers were on partial release from their duties at the University of Hull. The countries, selected jointly by the researchers and by ODA were: Bangladesh, Cameroon, India, Jamaica, Sierra Leone and Vanuatu, making two each from Africa, Asia and the Tropical Island Zones. In each location, in addition to interviewing key personnel and consulting local documentation, the researchers carried out two empirical surveys: a major exercise with primary school pupils to ascertain some of their perceptions on gender and education, and a minor exercise with students, mainly those training to be primary teachers for the same purpose. The outcomes contribute to the case study sections below (5.1 to 5.6), from which the summaries of factors influencing female participation in education that appear in the General Report (4D (b) below) and in this executive summary (3B (b) and (c) below) have been distilled.

B. FACTORS AFFECTING FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

a. Selection

The general level of factor identification was indicated by the ODA brief (eg 'social', 'economic', 'religious'). Additions were made both in consultation with ODA during the planning phase and on the initiative of the researchers, particularly as a result of the experience of the first field visit. The final list selected was: geographical, socio-cultural, health, economic, religious, legal, political/administrative, educational and initiatives. In reality it has to be recognised that there is considerable overlap between these factors and their influence on the problem in question, and in part for this reason the order in which the factors are discussed below is not knowingly significant.

b. Outcomes

These are discussed in detail below, as already indicated, but may be briefly summarised here as follows:

i. Geographical

The considerable spatial disparity, and in some cases incompleteness, of institutional provision (even at primary level) relates directly to difficulties of physical access which adversely affect girls more than boys; there is an overall and profound urban/rural dichotomy which favours towns and cities, especially in respect of secondary school (and especially single sex) provision for girls; patterns of transportation and migration affect educational provision and take up, again normally disadvantaging females and in some cases extreme physical difficulties, such as flooding and other hazards act in the same way. The influence of this factor can only be overcome by more sophisticated and multivariate spatial analysis of educational needs and the planning and implementation of integrated development projects as a result. Educational planning on its own would be futile.

ii. Socio-Cultural

A major deterrent to female take up and follow through of educational opportunities (even when these are available) is a near universal fundamental cultural bias in favour of males. The widespread operation of: patriarchal systems of social organisation; of customary early marriage; of the incidence of early pregnancy (in and out of marriage); of heavier domestic and subsistence duties of females (especially in rural areas); a generally lower regard for the value of female life, all combine though differentially in each case, to adversely affect the participation of girls and women in formal education. To this list may be added problems of seclusion and security in some areas. Such long standing constraints result in a dearth of female role models that could challenge the traditional one that is clearly acquired by both sexes at a very early age. The influence of this factor can only be overcome, inter alia by a profound change of attitude on the part of influential males, and in some countries of traditionally minded powerful females in key family positions.

iii Health

In general the effect of poverty and malnutrition on the health of school age children falls harder on girls than boys. Boys may get preferential feeding, while girls (who have a heavier domestic work load) are more likely to be undernourished. Even if they get to school, this adversely affects their performance and therefore retention rate. Health problems associated with pregnancy, especially for adolescent girls, obviously have a negative effect, as do rising trends of sexual activity in the younger generations where these occur. Problems associated with family size and family planning are widespread in relation to possible participation in education and imply the need for sex/health education at school level. It is clear that the health factor, though partly hidden and indirect in effect is a very significant one in respect of the quality of (young) female participation in education as well as the quantity of it.

iv. Economic

Together with the fundamental socio-cultural bias in favour of males, the economic factor, especially in terms of grinding poverty and hunger, is probably the most influential in adversely affecting female participation in education, especially in rural areas. In such harsh economic circumstances, both direct and hidden costs to a family of sending daughters to school are perceived by parents to be prohibitive in terms of the provision of books, paper and uniforms/clothing (important for social reasons) as well as the loss of vital help at home and on the land. In most cases the contribution of females is unpaid and they may have little or no experience of the handling of money which further reduces their status and power, but increases their vulnerability. Because of the patriarchal and patrilocal predominance, investment in a girl's schooling is wasteful since it benefits the family into which a girl marries rather than her own. In the more privileged classes investment in the education of females may be an advantage in 'marrying well'. This further increases the urban/rural gap. Vocational education which might relate to employment prospects, is everywhere weak and under-valued, but especially so in respect of the interests of girls. The apparent inability of some countries to resource their schools and even to pay their teachers regularly leads to low morale, teacher absenteeism and parental disenchantment.

v. Religious

Although in general acting indirectly, the religious factor is on balance a positive one, though it is often overcome by the fundamental socio-cultural bias in favour of males. The fact that most religious practitioners and leaders are male makes for a powerful image in favour of that sex, and it would be a very helpful move if religious leaders of all faiths and denominations were to speak out strongly in support of the female cause. Christian missions have, in various areas, had a most positive effect on female education and literacy levels, though some have a legacy of harsh sanctions in respect of early pregnancy. In Islamic areas the situation is generally not so supportive but a number of positive trends were apparent. The religious significance of sons in the Hindu family, while still operative, no longer seems in itself to disadvantage daughters. Often in contrast to the state system, and especially at secondary level, denominational schools are well organised and resourced, attracting stable, well qualified staff. This weighs heavily with parents when deciding whether or not to send their daughters to schools, especially since boarding facilities tend to be more favourable and secure.

vi. Legal

Again this factor acts mainly indirectly. Most countries have now legislated for equal status in respect of sex, but this is usually a recent innovation and traditional sanctions often still operate unchallenged. So there are still important areas where the law could be reformed further to encourage compliance and the system of justice strengthened to ensure that this actually happens. In many rural areas long standing societal rules constraining females are still operative, as is the case with condoning early marriage. The acquisition of minimum legal knowledge and support in such areas as: gaining justice and compensation for assault; understanding letters and contracts; arguing for educational provision according to the law, and challenging disadvantageous pressures in respect of marriage, divorce and inheritance could be very helpful to the female cause. There must be concern over the legality of the employment of (young) children, particularly girls, and the dominance of males in the legal profession. The encouragement and support for more females to seek and develop careers in various areas of this profession could be a very significant development in respect of female participation in education.

vii. Political/Administrative

Although policies exist in most cases for such developments as universal primary education, equal educational opportunities in terms of gender and the eradication of gender bias from texts and other materials, the political will to carry these through seems to be weak in the face of severe economic constraint. The creation of Ministries or Bureaux of Womens' Affairs appears to be counter productive, and the poor quality of local administrative/ advisory staff and resources renders such government initiatives as do occur, relatively ineffective. The record of NGOs is markedly better, and those governments that enable NGOs to operate in favour of increased female participation are to be commended. In some cases where strong political dichotomies or other such disparities exist even elite females may be disadvantaged by being in the 'wrong' camp, and their potential contribution to national development and the role of females in general to that end may be lost. Language policies can adversely affect female participation in that where vernaculars have no status, and schooling is either absent or very poor, women and girls remain 'trapped'. As with the churches, political leaders are almost always male, and until considerably more women break into the most influential echelons of power, the question of low female participation in education and its implications for national development may well remain on the sidelines.

viii. Educational

This factor itself can be a deterrent to female participation in schooling. Difficulties of accessibility, lack of resources and low teacher quality and morale are widespread. In particular the lack of female primary teachers in rural areas is a real problem. Parents are, in some countries, very reluctant indeed to send daughters to school if there is no female teacher, and the facilities for the accommodation and security of such teachers are usually absent or inadequate. The organisation of schooling in terms of the daily and seasonal imperatives of local economies usually renders it dysfunctional, and the curriculum is often unattractive in instrumental terms. At secondary level, in addition to the lack of (accessible) places, problems of cost, direct and hidden are acute, and there is a considerable need for more single-sex (girls) schools, some with secure boarding facilities and scholarship schemes to enable participation. Vocational education is weak and schemes open to girls in this field are particularly useful. There is still a widespread problem of gender bias in books and materials.

ix. Initiatives

In all the countries concerned, significant initiatives aiming to address aspects of the problem of female participation in education were noted. Some acted directly, others indirectly, but collectively they must be considered as a factor affecting the issue. This is important, since one must recognise the considerable efforts made by individuals and organisations in this regard in recent decades. Some governments have made substantial efforts to increase female enrolment at primary level in rural areas by building more (accessible) schools and enacting laws to encourage the employment of female teachers in such schools (eg Operation Blackboard in India). Some governments have instituted feeding schemes to alleviate problems of malnutrition. In some cases governments have been very cooperative in enabling NGOs to operate substantial schemes of income generation and primary schooling for rural females (eg Bangladesh). Religious and related organisations have prompted new opportunities for girls in need, such as the YWCA technical/vocational institute for girls in Jamaica. Agencies have been developed by individuals and groups to address issues of early pregnancy and harassment (eg the Crisis Centres and the work of Sisteren in Jamaica), and also to encourage women to become involved in politics by providing suitable skills training (eg The Vanuatu Council of Women).

c. Matrix Chart

In order to see how summaries of each of the factors briefly discussed above can be compared across the six national cases, a matrix chart may be found at the end of this executive summary.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

a) Preamble

The following recommendations are not in any order of priority. Each is followed by the initial capital letter(s) of the names of the countries to which it refers (B: Bangladesh; C: Cameroon; I: India; J: Jamaica; SL: Sierra Leone; V: Vanuatu). Initially recommendations arose in relation to each case. Further consideration and comparison led to the generalisation of a number of recommendations across more than one case. Recommendations are restated at the end of each of the cases in Section 5 below. (see also contents page above), sometimes adjusted to the specific case in question.

b) List of Major Recommendations

i. that increased support be given to NGOs involved in (non-formal) primary education projects which positively discriminate in favour of the participation of girls (B, C, I, SL);

ii. that, wherever possible, schemes for the enhancement of female participation in schooling, especially in rural areas, be part of an integrated and co-ordinated development including such other aspects as health, environment and economy (B, C, I, SL);

iii. that projects be developed and supported that address pre-school child care needs and adult literacy/skills development needs, in an integrated and co-ordinate way (B, C, I, SL, V);

iv. that aid be considered for the provision of books, other learning materials, uniforms (or other necessary clothing) and fees to enable more girls to participate in schooling at both primary and secondary levels (B, C, I, SL, V);

v. that support be given to the construction of more single-sex schools for girls with adequate residential facilities for pupils and female teachers in those locations where this is necessary for either environmental or social or cultural reasons (B, C, I, SL);

vi. that aid be provided for more scholarships to enable girls from poorer economic backgrounds to attend secondary school, whether boarding or otherwise (B, C, I, SL, V);

vii. that research funding be made available to examine the various aspects of gender and education relating to the all-age and new secondary schools of Jamaica (J);

viii. that positive incentives, such as more secondary scholarships for girls might be considered to go along with the present expansion of the junior secondary sector (V);

ix. that NGOs be encouraged to submit schemes for aid approval that would have the effect of improving the rate of progression of girls from primary to secondary schooling (B, C, I, SL);

x. that support be given to projects designed to eliminate gender bias from textbooks and other learning materials especially at primary and secondary level, but also in respect of teacher education and training (B, C, I, J, SL, V);

xi. the funding be considered for improvements in the provision of teacher education and training especially for primary school work, that would encourage greater female participation and include more residential accommodation for female students (B, I);

xii. that aid should be considered for the upgrading of technical and vocational education for both sexes, partly (though not exclusively) as a 'second chance' opportunity of dropouts from the formal system. In some cases this could be part of a community based skills development programme (B, C, I, J, SL, V);

xiii. that support be considered for the greater participation of anglophone students, and especially females in higher education in the Cameroons (C);

xiv. that efforts be supported to raise the level of male awareness of the community and family economic benefits likely to arise from increased participation of women and girls in educational and income-generating activities (B, C, I, SL, V);

xv. that aid be considered for credible womens' movements with track records of support for aspects of education and training, both formal and non-formal (B, C, I, J, SL, V);

xvi. that support be given to the upgrading of traditional/subsistence agricultural practices, especially where those involve women and girls to a significant extent (B, C, I, SL, V);

xvii. that schemes be supported to enhance health and sex education for adolescents with a view to reducing the occurrence of teenage pregnancies and the incidence of related medical and health problems (C, J, SL);

xviii. that family planning programmes be supported which include the educational needs of teenage mothers during and after confinement (C, J, SL);

xix. that support be considered for feeding schemes in primary and secondary schools where such a facility might encourage and enable the poorest families to send their boys and girls to school (B, C, I, J, SL)

xx. that aid be provided to improve the level of educational policy implementation at the local level through the training of significant numbers of personnel in systems of implementation and delivery. Their role would be a practical one of animation, advice and support rather than mere administration. The opportunity should be taken to include a considerable number of women in such programmes of training and subsequent employment (B, C, I, J, SL);

xxi. that assistance be provided to enable the school day and the school year to be adjusted to the realities of rural life and the demands of rural economies on child labour (B, C, I, SL);

xxii. that aid be given for resolving the urgent and particular problem of the security of female teachers especially in rural areas, by providing adequate accommodation and protection (B, I);

xxiii. that support be considered for rationalising the provision of schooling in large cities such as Freetown, Kingston and Yaounde where a combination of rapid urbanisation, historical locational legacies, severe transport problems and increasing complexity in patterns of demand are adversely affecting efficient delivery of schooling and ease of physical access for girls.

D. CONCLUSION

While acknowledging that our study confirms the near universal, and especially in rural areas, deeply rooted incidence of female disadvantage in education, the researchers would also wish to mention the numerous efforts being made in all case countries to confront the problem. We hope that the recommendations made above will be helpful in maintaining and increasing the effort to assist increased female participation, especially at primary and secondary level, and we would like to see more research carried out with a view to supporting this objective.

MATRIX CHART

Country Factors	BANGLADESH	CAMEROON	INDIA (with special reference to Gujarat and Orissa)
Geographical	Gross disparities in spatial pattern of school provision. Stark rural/urban dichotomy; secondary single sex in towns. Rainy season effects severe physical and economic disruption.	'Africa in miniature', from desert to rain forest. A mosaic of indigenous cultures overlain by a colonial dichotomy:. anglophone and francophone. Also spatial and religious variation in respect of Christian denominations and Islam.	Immense diversity even within Gujarat and Orissa. Massive rural/urban dichotomy; problems of isolation and opening up. Access to schooling incomplete despite overlapping networks. Distance to school still a problem despite progress made.
Socio-cultural	Fundamental cultural bias against females. Patriarchal systems operate against girls' schooling. Means of protection against assault is crucial. Many schools too far from home for girls. The attitude of fathers is very significant indeed.	Not an extreme case, but females still marginalised. Girls needed more at home; links between bride price and schooling. Growing problems of early pregnancy and delinquency in towns. Promotion limited for professional females.	Patriarchal system prevails in most areas, which gives preference to boys' education. Generally low valuation of female life. Systems of caste, tribe and class all have influence. Local and rural elites are significant, often conservative.
Health	The effect of widespread poverty in contributing to malnutrition is worse for girls, and the physical effects of young pregnancies can be severe. Enhanced food programme would be helpful.	Sexually precocious youth culture in towns could bring attendant health problems, including the damaging physical effects of young pregnancies.	Numerous poverty related conditions, including blindness, severely constrain schooling in rural areas. High female mortality still partly due to infanticide and malnutrition.
Economic	Very low economic profile for the majority cannot overcome the direct and hidden coats of school. Child labour is a key element in family survival. Adult males not yet supportive of females gaining new skills and status.	Rapidly declining situation, but women actively involved in the money economy both urban and rural, which creates tension between school and work in adolescence. External aid to cash crop sector may sometimes undermine the important work of women in the subsistence or locally marketed agricultural sectors, and adversely affect their status.	Grinding poverty and hunger has both rural and urban variants and a negative effect on girls' schooling. Worsening situation for female work force. Technical development aid may undermine women in that it tends to be directed to men, thereby enhancing the male status and economic position.
Religious	Not a direct factor, but invoked by those who oppose the education and development of females. Religious leaders need to espouse the female cause for the general good.	Considerably disparity in mission provision: Catholic: Protestant has differential effect for adolescent girls. In theory both Christian and Islamic movements are supportive of female schooling, but in practice development has been slower in the (Islamic) north.	Indirect effects only, and in any case a multi-religious context. Religious significance of the son in Hindu society may disadvantage girls.
Legal	Women are statutory minors, therefore dependent. Illiteracy leaves females impotent to invoke the laws of protection against assault, constraint and early marriage. Dowry problems. Need to strengthen legal support.	Modern law provides for equal opportunity, but customary law prevails in favour of males. Early marriage is illegal but accepted if both families are agreed.	There are long standing laws against child employment, but often disregarded. In some groups women are property, and this low status severely constrains their access to education. Women need more legal support.
Political-Administrative	Apparent lack of political will to address the problem, though general policy aims are helpful. The poor and unreliable nature of local administration and support is a crucially weak link.	Anglophone/Francophone 'divide' still significant, leading to exodus of qualified anglophones. Secondary sector incomplete in some rural areas. It is felt that too much aid goes to (francophone) higher education, and perhaps not enough to primary.	Federal/State/Local hierarchy leads to evaporation of political will to deal with female disadvantage. Power of local elders still significant, but local educational administration is weak.
Educational	The system is incomplete, therefore difficult of access to girls; and a consequent shortage of female teachers in rural areas results. Not such a problem in urban areas where middle class girls are proceeding to university and outscoring men.	Extremely varied enrolment and wastage patterns. Very high primary class numbers due to high birth rate. Long school day at odds with family work needs. Technical/Vocational sector is very weak.	Provided by a number of systems but provision still disparate and incomplete. Massive urban/rural dichotomy. Very high illiteracy rate among rural women but urban middle class girls achieving well in universities.
Initiatives	Many good non-formal NGO schemes in rural areas, especially BRAC. Also good work at secondary level for girls by Asia Foundation/USAID. Acceptance of female teacher trainees with lower grades than men could be counter-productive.	Ministry is flexible over age of female enrolment. There is a Ministry of Women's Affairs, though underfunded and weak, and numerous schemes for dropout girls. OIC model in Buea (vocational) is effective.	Numerous initiatives involving NGOs in development work for rural women and young children. Also Federal Ministry scheme Operation Blackboard to increase number of rural primary places and female teachers.

Country Factors	JAMAICA	SIERRA LEONE	VANUATU
Geographical	Considerable disparity of provision despite small scale, due to urban/rural juxtaposition, lack of catchments and historical locations of prestigious schools. Complicated migrations in and out of urban areas, also to sec. schools.	Christian/Moslem division, also very marked urban rural dichotomy with capital city Freetown markedly different from the rest of SL. Very poor interior road network with incomplete primary system difficult of access.	Immense diversity between and within each island. Usual geographical problems of small archipelago states. Some locations face extreme isolation; urban/rural dichotomy is stark. Core/periphery problems for education.
Socio-cultural	Matrifocal system favours females. Girls have positive role models at home and at school. But there is a major problem of teenage pregnancies and a continued male dominance in political and business fields.	Traditional female roles still upheld and ceremonially legitimised. Mature rural girls obliged to marry. Much early marriage and teenage pregnancy. Some liaisons with older men to safeguard education and fund it, mainly Freetown area.	Many cultures and languages plus anglophone/francophone dichotomy. Females have lower status than males in all groups. Low aspirations among rural girls but some urban professionals. May miss out on French/English, even Bislama, if they do not attend school.
Health	Damaging medical effects of early child bearing, but female life expectancy still higher than male. Possibility of stress associated with the crucial Common Entrance examination.	Many health problems linked with extreme poverty and high levels of early sexual activity. Generally low levels of under-nourishment among girls affects educational performance adversely.	High birth rates and large families in rural areas puts pressure on inadequate health provision. Female mortality is higher than male, which is unusual in global terms.
Economic	Jamaican women are used to handling money and controlling family budgets. Educated females, including qualified teachers move into modern sector jobs. Large urban poverty zones.	Widespread poverty creates direct and hidden costs which work against girls' schooling especially in rural regions. Both girls and boys involved in petty trading. There are very few income generating jobs for women in rural areas.	Girls traditionally work on the land; 'gardens' are significant to family economies. Hidden costs of education favour the schooling of boys in the rural societies, but in towns, girls are educated for modern sector jobs.
Religious	Indirect effect in respect of disparate mission legacy and contemporary denominational input. Generally positive for girls, though some criticism of male authority model in Christian churches.	Not a direct factor against female education, though some discriminatory customs are blamed on religion especially Islam. In fact both Islamic and Christian organisations have been supportive of girls' education.	Disparate and varied mission legacy, but generally supportive of girls' schooling. Traditional (kastom) religion not so supportive, and in fact reinforces low female status.
Legal	Although schooling not being compulsory is not unique to Jamaica, it may well in this case affect the poor enrolment and attendance rates of boys in the lower socio-economic sectors.	Modern laws are supportive, though not always enforced, but traditional custom is stronger in rural regions and tends to act against female educational opportunity.	Minimum age of marriage law (18) sometimes disregarded in rural areas where chiefs maintain traditional laws which favour males. Family Law Bill is under consideration.
Political-Administrative	Ministry has an indirect, facilitating/mediating role. Power lies with School Governing Bodies, who it is claimed favour male appointments at senior level. Ministry decentralisation may boost community involvement.	Political will is weak in meeting educational needs of the majority: system only partly operative. Women's position is weak and The Women's Bureau has inadequate funding. Political problems of indigenous language status.	Traditionally females are not permitted to speak in public but this is changing. There is said to be regional/island bias in appointments but women face discrimination everywhere. Some pro female pressure groups.
Educational	There is an 'educational culture', and strong social class influence. The Common Entrance examination, selecting for high school dominates the system, and for the majority population, girls gain more places than boys. But sex bias in texts.	Underfunded incomplete system. Late payment of teachers adversely affects morale and leads to absenteeism. System of repeating classes increases chances of female dropout. The curriculum could be more relevant.	Primary sector almost complete, plus a growing private nursery feeder system, but geographical factors make secondary participation difficult, especially for girls. Also the element of selection in the junior secondary sector is adverse, despite the present expansion.
Initiatives	Crisis centres for pregnant teenagers are effective but need more support. The YWCA Vocational Education Institute excellent as a second chance for drop-out girls. UWI has a 'Women in Development' programme.	Large birth control programme by IPPF. Various NGO activities in support of rural women. New Basic Education Reform aims to provide work-oriented curriculum. Several women's organisations opening up.	Much private effort to develop the nursery sector. Vanuatu Council of Women is an active and successful pressure group working for better health, schooling and legal support for women and girls.

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4. GENERAL REPORT

The core of the general report comprises a synthesis of the findings in respect of each of the nine factors selected for study. This derives of course from the comparative study of the factors as operating in each case and reported country by country in section 5 below. Preceding the discussion of factors are: an introduction to the project; a mention of methodology and of the primary pupil survey in particular.

A) Introduction and Rationale

The idea of this project arose within the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) and a brief description for tender was issued to a number of institutions. The researchers responded to the general terms of the tender and having been selected have endeavoured to work within those terms. A Steering Committee was set up comprising both the researchers and ODA education advisers, and this has met at key stages in the schedule outlined below.

A number of matters of policy arose from the terms of reference and the Steering Committee discussions, notably:-

a. as the project title implied, the focus of the study was to be on factors affecting female participation in education and not, except as a bi-product, on the accumulation of further data on the near universal and well documented phenomenon of female disadvantage in respect of education;

b. except in the initial phase of documentary search to aid the selection of factors and provide a general context, the project was to be limited to the six cases studies

the project was to have comparative dimension to the extent that it would be possible to:

- i. synthesise the outcomes under the same factor headings (as in sub-section 4D below);
- ii. present the major outcomes in a form that would enable comparison to be facilitated (see matrix chart - sub-section 3B(c) above);
- iii. identify certain recommendations that could be relevant at least across the group of six countries, but also perhaps beyond to comparable states and regions (see 3B (b) above), though inevitably some recommendations would be country specific.

d. the main purpose of the project was to be of assistance to decision-makers both political and professional, who are involved in the direct task of confronting the problem of female participation in education, whether:

- i. within developing country systems;
- ii. in aid agencies;
- iii. in NGOs;
- iv. as consultants.

e. in consequence of (d) above the report was to be presented in a clear and simple way and not as an academic thesis (hence the virtual absence of footnotes, references and statistical tables).

B Methodology

It was agreed by the Steering Committee that the project be carried out in three phases: documentary research and field visit planning; six field study visits; analysis of information gathered, and compilation of report.

a. Documentary Research and Field Visit Planning (June - October 1989)

i. This being essentially a case study and comparative exercise, involving a relatively small number of countries, the first task of the Steering Committee was to select the cases to be included. A number of broad criteria were employed, notably: that the project should include examples from sub-Saharan Africa, from South and/or South-East Asia, and from the tropical island zones; that within the group of six nations a significant range of profiles existed in respect of the incidence of female participation in education. The outcome was that the following nations were to be included: Bangladesh, Cameroon, India, Jamaica, Sierra Leone and Vanuatu. The practical inclusion of each was effected through the good offices of variety of agencies to whom the grateful acknowledgement of the researchers has been expressed in the Preface to this report.

ii. Although documentary research of various kinds occurred throughout the project, a major exercise was necessary in the first phase in order to inform the thinking of researchers on the final selection of factors to be included. As a result of a computer search and follow up, a bibliography of some 700 items was compiled in July/August 1989. A copy of this is being made available to ODA and it is also being held on disc. Part of the follow up to this project will be to update this bibliography and publish it.

iii. The six field visits were planned to take place within the period of November 1989 to September 1990 and this was duly carried out. Constraints of finance and ongoing commitments of the researchers at the University of Hull plus the operational schedules of the systems of the countries involved lead to the selection of 3 weeks as the target period for each field visit. They duly took place in the following order: Sierra Leone (November/December 1989); India (January/February 1990); Bangladesh (February/March 1990); Cameroon (April/May 1990); Jamaica (June/July 1990); Vanuatu (September/October 1990).

b. Methodology and Operation (June 1989 - October 1990)

i. Introduction and Medium

In order to maximise the comparative potential, as required by the brief, the same field strategies, exercises and instruments were designed and used for each country. In the case of India two locations (based on Baroda in Gujarat and Bhubaneswar in Orissa) were selected in view of the obvious variety of cultures and socio-economic circumstances in that country. As a result of this and of the anglophone/francophone dichotomies of Cameroon and Vanuatu, and the official medium in Bangladesh, several of the instruments were employed in translation from the original, so that in all the following languages were involved: English, French, Bangla, Gujarati and Oriya. In certain rural locations it was also necessary to engage in oral translation from vernaculars. In each of the countries visited the researchers acted through and with the cooperation of local advisers. In respect of gender, the cohort of local advisers comprised six females and six males.

ii. Information Gathering

In each of the seven cases the following exercises were carried through in order to obtain primary information:

- reading and, wherever possible, collection of documentary sources of relevant information locally generated and/or locally available: overall 163 such items were consulted.

- interviews with senior professionals such as education officials, employees of NGOs, university researchers and tutors, teacher trainers and head-teachers. Attempts were made to ensure significant representation of both sexes, but the outcome was determined by the gender of office holders and availability at the time. The balance of senior professionals in the various cases was as follows:

Country	Females	Males
Bangladesh	6	10
Cameroon	7	15
India		
a. Delhi	6	3
b. Gujarat	4	9
c. Orissa	4	8
Jamaica	22	7
Sierra Leone	17	16
Vanuatu	12	8

- interviews with parents of children in the primary schools visited. This proved the most problematical of surveys, parents in some locations being unavailable due to their working commitments or unwilling to participate for reasons of understandable caution or customary constraints of other kinds. Consequently in some places it was not possible to take account of information, attitudes or views from this source, but in other places these inputs were available and contributed to the general picture the researchers were able to form.

- surveys with students took place in every country, but in one place in Jamaica, for reasons of examinations proceeding a group interview was held instead. In every other location two exercises were operated, usually with students training to be primary teachers, but in one place a group of social science undergraduates was also included (NISWASS, Bhubaneswar). The exercise which has been used here to contribute towards our findings was a simple assignment of numerical ranking to a series of statements offering reasons as to whether or not there was female disadvantage, and if so (which was usually the majority view), then what was the relative significance of different factors at work. A copy of the survey form is shown below. This form also formed part of the interview with some of the senior professionals. The breakdown of students by gender in the various locations was as indicated below. The other exercise conducted with the students used a repertory grid technique. The findings are being made available to ODA and will be used in follow-up work to the present project.

Country	Females	Males
Bangladesh	7	5
Cameroon	40	32
India		
a. Gujarat	27	0
b. Bhubaneswar	50	19
Jamaica	39	9
Sierra Leone	37	39
Vanuatu	31	23

- Surveys with primary pupils constituted our major empirical exercise, and were seen by the researchers as a very important aspect of the field visits in view of our brief to focus as far as possible on the primary sector. This survey involved large enough numbers to be capable of computer analysis, and is therefore also given a separate identity in this report (see sub-section C immediately following and sub sections Ac) of each of the case study reports in section 5 below.

c. The Primary Pupil Survey

The Primary School survey instrument (see copy below) was a questionnaire designed for upper primary pupils (classes 5, 6 or 7) depending on the length of the primary cycle in each country and was administered to the oldest class in each school. It was prepared in English and French for the anglophone and francophone countries and special editions were printed in Gujarati, Oriya and Bangla for use in India and Bangladesh. A blank copy of the survey form is found at the end of this section.

In all, 1225 children did the questionnaire and 1193 copies were sufficiently complete to be analysed by the SSPS-X computer programme. The sample consists of 606 boys (50.8%) and 587 girls (49.2%). The age range includes children as young as eight and as old as eighteen: 9.5% were between 8 - 10 years old; 78.4% between 11-13 years old; 12.1% were between 14 - 18 years old.

The pupils were classified as attending rural schools (39%) semi-urban schools (18%) and urban schools (43%). It was hoped to obtain some indications of the significance of various factors in respect of school enrolment and wastage, such as: transport/distance to school; family size; parental occupation; parental literacy; the degree to which children help at home and on the land; reasons for absence from school; and the attitude of mothers, fathers and the children themselves to their schooling. To some extent the children to whom we ought to have been putting the questions were those who were not at school but the results from asking those who do attend school have been sufficiently interesting to justify the exercise. Some such results of the analysis by country are indicated in each case-study but there are certain general overall outcomes which are pertinent to the question of participation in education.

Both boys and girls help at home and on the land a great deal in all six countries. Fetching water, working with the crops, sweeping and looking after siblings score high for both sexes. Girls are involved to a statistically significant degree more than boys in the home-based tasks of laundry, sweeping and food-preparation. Boys have statistically significant scores for working in the fields and for going to the market, a reflection of the socio-cultural attitudes in several of the countries where girls are kept within the home as much as possible. Absence from school was not significant by sex, although head-teachers often said they though girls were better attenders. It is alarming to note however that 27% of the pupils surveyed had been absent sometime in the week preceding the date of the survey. Indeed 45 per cent stated that they sometimes could not come to school because of jobs they had to do for their mother or father. This seemed to affect boys more than girls (50% : 40%). Family size and father's occupation correlate strongly with the amount of help contributed by the children: pupils from larger and poorer families have more responsibilities at home. Both boys and girls agree however that it is girls who help most.

These children, who are attending school, feel that both mother and father want them to do so, whether they are boys or girls, but over 50% have the impression that boys stay on at school longer than girls. Again, 23% think girls don't need to go to school as much as boys and 24% think girls do not really need to go to school at all. These figures, coming from children who are relatively advantaged, are alarming, especially when one realises that although statistically significant by sex (ie there are more boys rejecting the need for education for girls), over 100 of the 600 girls actually in school seemed to feel girls had no need, or perhaps no right to be there. Negative attitudes towards girls' education, awareness of cost of schooling, parents' level of literacy and pupils' hopes and intentions about continuing their education all correlate with family size, father's occupation and rural/urban location.

Career choices by boys and girls were strongly influenced by location and by sex. Rural children, with more limited experience and fewer role models, operated within a far smaller range of choices than did urban children and this was particularly noticeable in the case of girls where sometimes only 'teacher' and 'nurse' represented the aspirations of a whole class. Overall there were 93 different choices made by boys and 65 made by girls. The boys' choices are more imaginative, varied and ambitious, the most popular being doctor (134), teacher (68), engineer (42), farmer (31), pilot (29), soldier (26), mechanic (27), policeman (24), driver (15) and bank clerk (13). The girls' list is limited and equally sex-stereotyped - doctor (137), teacher (156), nurse (82), typist (21), etc. As regards marriage, in most countries 80 - 90% of the pupils surveyed expected to marry and to have children. It is interesting however that a statistically significant higher proportion of boys expect to marry and also propose to have more children and particularly more male children than do girls. In general the boys' views on marriage and parenthood are more traditional than those of their sisters.

Career and marriage plans at 12 or 13 years of age are not always very realistic but it is nevertheless revealing when boys opt to be President, a ship's captain or to work at NASA, while girls plan to be nurses, hair-dressers or dress-makers, even in a country like Jamaica where girls' secondary school selection results are superior to those of the boys.

PRIMARY PUPIL SURVEY

A B C D E

SCHOOL: ______________________

PRIMARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE: PUPILS ' QUESTIONNAIRE

1 . Name: ______________________ BOY ? GIRL ?

2. Age 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

3. Class 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. How do you usually come to school?

Walk ☐ bus ☐

bicycle ☐ car ☐

lorry ☐ another way ☐ (   )

5. Your Family

a. How many brothers do you have? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b. How many sisters do you have? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

c. Show your brothers (🚹) and sisters (🚺) in order from the oldest to the youngest. Which one is you?

d. Write the age of each brother or sister underneath their pictures. How old do you think they are?

e. Your parents

Where does your father work? ______________________

Where does your mother work? ______________________

Who looks after you most at home?

mother ☐ older brother ☐

father ☐ auntie ☐

grandmother ☐ someone else ☐

older sister ☐ I look after myself ☐

6. WHAT DO YOU DO TO HELP YOUR MOTHER OR FATHER?

	Every Day	Sometimes	Never
Work in field with crops			
Fetch water			
Look after little brothers and sisters			
Prepare food			
Make things			
Sweeping			
Shopping/Going to Market			
Washing/Laundry			
Anything else			

7. HAVE YOU BEEN ABSENT (AWAY) FROM SCHOOL THIS WEEK OR LAST WEEK?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If "Yes", why were you absent (away)?
You can tick one, two or even more reasons. ☑

- ☐ You were ill.
- ☐ You went to the market.
- ☐ You went on a visit.
- ☐ Visitors came to your home.
- ☐ It was too hot.
- ☐ It rained.
- ☐ You were looking after little brothers and sisters.
- ☐ There was no money for school.
- ☐ You were helping mother. (How ?____________________________________)
- ☐ You were helping father. (How ?____________________________________)
- ☐ You went to hospital/clinic.
- ☐ You played instead.
- ☐ Anything else? (____)

8. SAY WHETHER YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THESE SENTENCES:

☑ AGREE (Yes!)

☒ DISAGREE (No!)

1. Girls help at home more than boys. ☐ ☐
2. Boys usually stay at school for more years than girls. ☐ ☐
3. Girls need to go to school as much as boys. ☐ ☐
4. Girls are usually younger than boys when they stop going to school. ☐ ☐
5. My mother wants me to come to school very much. ☐ ☐
6. Girls don't really need to go to school. ☐ ☐
7. Sometimes I can't come to school because there are jobs I must do for my mother or my father. ☐ ☐
8. It costs a lot of money to go to school. ☐ ☐
9. I wish school was nearer to my house. ☐ ☐
10. My father wants me to come to school very much. ☐ ☐
11. I think my mother is good at reading and writing. ☐ ☐
12. I think my father is good at reading and writing. ☐ ☐
13. I think I shall be leaving school at the end of this year. ☐ ☐
14. I would like to go to school next year. ☐ ☐
15. It is difficult to come to school every day. ☐ ☐
16. I would like to go to secondary school. ☐ ☐
17. I like school. ☐ ☐

9. WHEN I GROW UP

When I grow up, the work I'd like to do is ______________________________

I should like to get married YES NO

I should like to have children YES NO

I should like to have ☐ girls and ☐ boys

STUDENT SURVEY

FACTORS AFFECTING FEMALE PARTICIPATION

1.CONTEXT

1.1 Is there a problem of female participation in education at any level? YES/NO

1.2 If "No", then please proceed to item E3 below.

1.3 If "Yes", then please circle the stage at which you consider the problem to be most significant.
Higher Education
Secondary Education
Primary Education

1.4 If "Yes" then is this mainly a rural problem? YES/NO

2. CAUSES OF LACK OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION AT PRIMARY LEVEL

(In each of the boxes in this section please insert a score from
1 through 5 to indicate the strength of the factors concerned where:
1 = unimportant 2 = of little importance 3 = significant
4 = very important 5 = crucial).

	Factor	Score
2.1	Education is not compulsory.	☐
2.2	There are not enough schools/places.	☐
2.3	Distances from home to school are too great.	☐
2.4	Education is not free and boys gain preference in parental decision.	☐
2.5	The traditional female role model is too strong.	☐
2.6	Enrolment procedures are weak.	☐
2.7	There is no pre-school nursery education.	☐
2.8	Fathers are not keen on girls' education.	☐
2.9	Domestic duties are greater for girls than for boys.	☐
2.10	Girls are needed on the land more than boys are.	☐
2.11	The range of paid occupations open to girls is perceived to be limited.	☐
2.12	Young boys discourage young girls by their attitude to them.	☐
2.13	The age of marriage is relatively young.	☐
2.14	Religious factors favour the education of boys.	☐
2.15	The linguistic development of girls is impeded by their role at home/in the community.	☐
2.16	The curriculum content affects girls adversely.	☐

2.17 The family arrangement is patrilocal. ☐

2.18 Other Factors please state and score) ☐

a) ☐

b) ☐

c) ☐

3. CAUSES OF STRONG FEMALE PARTICIPATION AT PRIMARY LEVEL

(In each of the boxes in this section please insert a score from 1 through 5 to indicate the strength of the factors concerned where: 1 = unimportant 2 = of little importance 3 = significant 4 = very important 5 = crucial).

3.1 There are school places available for all girls. ☐

3.2 Enrolment and attendance procedures are strong. ☐

3.3 There is no problem of travelling to school. ☐

3.4 Education is free. ☐

3.5 The influence of males is not discouraging. ☐

3.6 The history of the society has placed females in a commanding role at family level. ☐

3.7 The family arrangement is matrilocal. ☐

3.8 Pre-school provision has been made available. ☐

3.9 The curriculum content is sensitive to the interests of both sexes. ☐

3.10 Once in school young girls do better than boys. ☐

3.11 Women (other than teachers) are seen in authority positions. ☐

3.12 Religious factors are equally favourable to both sexes. ☐

3.13 The range of paid occupations for women is wide. ☐

3.14 There are no marriage pressures at this stage. ☐

3.15 Modern media (eg TV) have enhanced linguistic development for all young children. ☐

3.16 Women's movements have fought successfully for equal opportunities. ☐

3.17 Other Factors (please state and score) ☐

a) ☐

b) ☐

c) ☐

d) Factors

A. Preamble

As mentioned above, the factors selected for inclusion emerged partly as a result of our brief and partly from observations in the course of the study. Although they are listed separately, in reality they inter-relate, overlap and even integrate in their influence on the participation of females in education in the countries included in this study, as elsewhere.

Overarching themes such as urban/rural dichotomy, and the fundamental significance of widespread poverty recur, and transcend the divisions of convenience which enable individual factors to be independently considered.

It has also to be recognised that each of the factors discussed below acts both directly and indirectly on the issue in question.

B. List

The order in which the factors are listed does not imply any priority in terms of relative significance.

i. Geographical

This factor has to do with various types of spatial disparity within a system of educational provision. In these cases we are dealing with systems of provision within national parameters or terms of reference, and the first point of note is that some are incomplete even at primary level, as for example in Bangladesh and Sierra Leone. In India, regulations have been passed to ensure a primary school facility within a few kilometres of every child, but the massive scale of population increase and movement almost certainly means that here too there are communities without primary schools. Even where systems are officially complete at this level there is often a problem of accessibility due to irregular patterns of school location caused by a combination of physical difficulties and historical legacies. Most patterns of schooling have grown piecemeal by accretion and with a number of providers involved at different times. The effect of incompleteness and/or irregularity of primary provision in spatial terms is to create problems of distance between home and school. If such distance is perceived by parents to be manageable but problematical then in general it is more likely that the enrolment and attendance of girls will be adversely affected rather than boys. For obvious reasons, and even in urban areas, distance between home and secondary school is normally greater than for primary. Furthermore the secondary sector is even more likely to be incomplete, making physical access for those girls who qualify particularly difficult, or even impossible.

The fundamental urban/rural dichotomy that exists in all cases, but to different degrees, relates directly to the political geography of educational provision. There tends to be a centralisation of administration and provision that works in favour of the urban sector and especially of the primate city. This produces core-periphery imbalances at various scales from national to local and affecting qualitative as well as quantitative aspects of provision. For the education of girls this is perhaps most influential at secondary level where there is often a disproportionate concentration of provision in urban areas and especially of such single sex schools as may exist. This is very significant for girls in that their educational performance tends to be enhanced by the environment of such schools.

Urban/rural dichotomy relates also to differential concentrations of wealth and influence Complicated patterns exist in both sectors but in general the concentration of the higher socio-economic classes in the major urban centres means that the higher level of educational provision and take-up in respect of females relates to these classes. Nonetheless the increasing participation and success of elite females in the tertiary sector may lead to greater influence of women in high level decision-making and also greater visibility of successful females in so-called male fields/ occupations, for example in science, technology and engineering.

The direct relationship between political geography and educational organisation and administration is discussed below but mention should be made here of the 'unofficial' effect of political influence acting in geographical terms, such as the dominance of particular cultural, ethnic or class groups acting spatially, and directly or indirectly affecting the participation of females in education.The progressive pressures of the more developed plains communities on the hill tribes of Orissa, partly through the manipulation of educational influence is a case in point. The differential effect of religious organisations and their networks of education provision is also mentioned below.

Human migration is profoundly geographical and can relate directly to the issue of female participation in education at various temporal and spatial scales. Problems of distance and daily journey to school have been noted, though they are not confined to rural areas, but there is also the question of gender and urbanisation. For example, it has long been the case in Jamaica that females migrate in larger numbers to major urban centres within and beyond the island, while in Bangladesh, it is the males who are the prime movers with most females remaining very restricted in this sense. The relationship between education and migration can have both causal and consequential dimensions, but either tends to enhance gender divergence. If, as has generally been the case, males migrate to towns and cities, the gender divergence in terms of education may widen, but if whole families move then it may be more likely that girls as well as boys can benefit from accessibility to urban schooling.

Clearly the form and operation of transportation networks is influential, not only in respect of migration per se, but also in respect of modifying population distribution and settlement patterns. As well as the pressures on females in respect of travelling to school in terms of harassment and discrimination, there is the tendency for settlements and therefore often schools to locate or relocate in relation to a new or enhanced routeway such as the new highway through Orissa, and the major axis between Bamenda and Buea in Cameroon.

As affecting matters of educational provision and accessibility, the geographical factor operates mainly on the human and social side, but there can also be physical difficulties. For example the widespread seasonal flooding in Bangladesh renders whole communities inoperative and includes the destruction of schools. Although transportation by water may be available to alternative locations this is costly, and where choices have to be made, they fall in favour of males. In some remote rural areas, for example in Orissa, there can be danger from wild animals, which again tends to restrict the possibilities of girls attending school.

It is clear that the types of influence brought to bear on the problem of female participation by geographical factors are generally of the type that can only be addressed through well planned integrated schemes of (rural) development, and we are keen to stress the significance of such an approach where educational development is part of such coordinated efforts. However there are some more specifically educational areas where geographical skills may be helpful, such as in the more expert locating and mapping of schools in the rural sector and the reform of catchments and flows of pupils in large urban centres which could enhance the participation of girls in primary and secondary schooling.

ii. Socio-Cultural

In almost all countries and communities there is a fundamental cultural bias in favour of males. In those cases in this study where female participation in education was found to be very limited, this factor operated very strongly through decisions about child care, nutrition, physical work, freedom of movement and marriage. Almost all the societies visited were patriarchal, with the status, power and particularly attitude of fathers being a key factor in encouraging or restricting the schooling of their daughters. Even in Jamaica, where matriarchal patterns are almost universal, the exercise of male control over the career prospects of often better educated and qualified women was evident. Consequently for all of the cases we see the need to engender greater male awareness of the disadvantages faced by females in respect of education, and greater willingness on the part of influential males, such as religious and political leaders to provide a strong advocacy of the female cause in this regard. In trying to encourage the education of girls in developing countries one is confronted not only by widespread poverty, but also deeply rooted social and cultural attitudes which fail to perceive the crucial significance of involving the talents of females in the process of development. Consequently if a girl is to be educated, there are often severe cultural costs to be met; a price to pay for going against established social norms and, in particular, challenging the traditional authority of males. Such problems tend to be more severe in rural areas, but even in towns and cities where prospects of paid employment for educated girls may exist, many parents still fear the possibility of their daughters being alienated from traditional life-styles by contact with essentially 'western' education with its associated values.

The demand for girls' education has to come from the family itself, and in order to overcome traditional attitudes there have to be clearly discernable advantages to the family if parents are to invest in schooling for their daughters. The traditional female role is learned by girls from a very early age, and the work they do in the household, and often also on the land, is often crucial to their mothers who themselves have extremely heavy work burdens and long child-bearing cycles. Early marriage is common in most of the cases studied, and this normally leads to early pregnancy. In some cases there is a high incidence of early pregnancy outside marriage. Either way, early pregnancy has a strong cultural dimension that would need to be contested through some form of education if the negative effects (including educational) are to be overcome. Early marriage inevitably shortens girls' schooling. Those who commence school late and repeat one or two classes may well reach the traditional age of marriage before they reach the end of the primary cycle.

Systems of dowry and bride-price may also have a negative effect on the participation of girls in schooling. The necessity of paying a dowry may make a girl a burden to her parents, which together with any investment that may be made in her education is often seen as a waste of scarce resources. Patrilocal and exogenous marriage customs tend to encourage this attitude. Bride-price customs encourage early marriage, sometimes to gain money needed to find a bride for a son.

For many girls in developing countries, and especially in the rural sector, there is a dearth of alternative role models and even where there is access to modern media, traditional roles are often portrayed for females. This is even the case with school texts at both primary and secondary level. In urban areas, and especially cities, different role models are evident, often within the family in the various elites, and there are clear trends of increased participation and success on the part of females in secondary and higher education. Nonetheless there still appear to be constraints placed upon the employment and promotion prospects of educated females which help to reinforce a 'culture of lower aspirations'. Successful and/or powerful women within such families and outside are not necessarily supportive of the more modern and mobile potential of younger educated females. In some cases problems of physical security and seclusion lead to severe limitations on female participation in schooling.

It is perhaps this socio-cultural factor of attitudes towards girls which, especially when combined with economic constraint, most seriously impedes advance in the development of female participation in education. In fact, in Jamaica which has an impressive record in girls' enrolment, retention and achievement in school, the positive attitudes towards girls' education seem to override even the negative effect of the economic factor.

iii. Health

Socio-cultural attitudes towards girls and women affect their access to education as we have seen, but even more importantly may affect their very survival. Globally, the mortality rate for females is generally lower than that for men but in three of the countries surveyed it is higher. Not only is this symptomatic of the lower value placed on female life, but it suggests that in terms of work-burden, malnutrition and lengthy child-bearing cycles, many of the women in these regions have so much to contend with that education for themselves or their daughters cannot be in the forefront of their minds. Successful schemes of non formal education recognise this.

Poverty and malnutrition affect the access to school of both boys and girls and the benefit they can derive from their education if they do manage to go to school. However, because of their more favoured status, boys often tend to be better nourished and to receive treatment more quickly when they are ill. Schemes to promote girls' education in poorer areas need to address problems of health and nutrition if they are to be successful.

The onset of puberty is an important factor in its effect on girls' education. We have seen that it increases vulnerability and may therefore make parents decide to withdraw their daughters from school. Distance to school, the lack of female teachers, poor or non-existent toilet facilities and the necessity to board away from home can all be factors contributing to such a decision at this age.

In some of the countries studied puberty marked the point when girls were likely to be withdrawn from school to marry, especially in rural areas. Early marriage is usually followed by early pregnancy. Health-workers voiced their concern over the possible deleterious effects of early pregnancy on young bodies. In two of the countries surveyed there were problems of teenage pregnancy at secondary school level with drop-out occurring particularly in Forms 3 and 4. The loss of unmarried girls who have managed to get as far as this is particularly sad and schemes to keep them in the education system by providing health care, among other things, are very much to be welcomed. In some countries where teenage pregnancies are a problem, there was concern expressed about the scale of sexual activity in the younger generations. Some informants would see the constraint of such customary behaviour as being highly desirable, and presumably this would include some form of health/sex education.

Family size correlated strongly in our survey with the amount of help children had to give at home, with parental attitudes towards schooling, with pupils' hopes and intentions about continuing their education, and with awareness of cost. Family planning is obviously an important factor in increasing the educational chances of both boys and girls, but girls in particular.

iv. Economic

The economic factor, especially in terms of poverty and hunger was found to be the major underlying influence acting against the participation of girls in formal education, in both direct and indirect ways. At a macro level the general economic status of each national case is mentioned below, but masks considerable disparities including that between the traditional and modern sectors which relates closely to rural/urban dichotomies of different kinds, scales and degrees in educational terms. Several of the countries concerned rank among the poorest in the world by standard indices, especially Sierra Leone, Bangladesh and India, and this alone makes it extremely difficult for them to provide even the most basic educational facilities for their rural populations, to say nothing of the increasing ranks of the urban poor.

Clearly women and girls are more disadvantaged in the traditional rural sectors where the majority of the population of all but one (Jamaica) of the cases resides. Inability to meet or cope with both the direct and hidden costs of female participation in schooling was seen to be a prime cause of low levels of involvement and high levels of wastage. In direct terms the cost of such items as exercise books, paper, writing materials, textbooks and sometimes uniforms is prohibitive and a family will have to choose which, if any, of their children will be supported to attend school. In such a situation girls tend to be excluded for a variety of reasons that relate more to hidden costs and above mentioned social and cultural factors. The hidden costs include the loss of assistance to parents in the home and on the land, both areas where in general females make a more profound or basic contribution than males on which the sheer survival of many communities depends, often in terms of subsistence agriculture. This is even more crucial when males have migrated elsewhere in search of paid work and may very well have been unsuccessful but are still absent.

The contribution of women and girls tends to be unpaid and so rural women may have little traditional role or experience in respect of the handling of money. This directly and often severely constrains their status and influence. In societies where women engage in marketing and even petty trading, the situation is obviously different. Partly due to the increased income, there may be the capacity to absorb the cost of female attendance at primary school, but the very expectation of trading may, together with other factors operating in adolescence, be acting against enrolment or retention in secondary schooling. In situations where poverty is deepening there is a tendency for males to move into the marketing and petty trading areas traditionally occupied by females.

It is clear that the cultural costs of education in traditional societies recognised by some commentators do exist in some of the cases included here, and may take both 'pure' and 'applied' forms. The former refers to the sanctions that may operate against an individual for going against the norms of the society, and females are certainly subject to such pressures. The latter is concerned with the wider meaning of the term 'culture' to encompass the whole way of life, including the economic dimension, of a human group. Regular and sustained involvement in the type of formal schooling normally operated may well render the students unable to make a helpful contribution to the traditional means of survival on which their family and community is increasingly dependent as prospects of economic development disappear.

It is for the types of reasons outlined above that education is becoming increasingly questioned by poor rural and even urban societies in terms of its value as an investment in the future of the family/community. Even in relatively good times, investment in the education of daughters was often seen as a waste in that the potential benefit would accrue to the family of the future husband. Directly economic features such as bride price and dowry practices in traditional societies are interwoven with patterns of kinship and marriage already discussed and although not always operating against the schooling of girls, tend usually to do so in the mass of the poorer socio-economic groups who constitute the majority of the population in developing countries.

Relationship between curriculum and economy is also significant, and has been touched upon in relation to the potential alienation of educated young people from the harsh survival imperatives of their traditional communities. Conventional formal schooling develops skills that are most marketable in the modern sector of a diversified economy. In developing countries this strongly favours urban areas where the operation of females in this sector, with its implications for upward mobility is generally accepted, as for example in Jamaica. Elsewhere this can be problematical, even counter productive, except for daughters of the elite groups and the emerging middle classes where they exist. As in developed countries, the apparently dysfunctional nature of most schooling in economic terms acts against the employability of young people and perhaps also against their capacity for self-employment whether in urban or rural settings. This concern overlaps with the educational factor and is discussed further below in relation to the need for *suitable forms* of vocational and technical education to be encouraged, especially for girls.

v. Religious

Historically there are of course close links between religion and the development of education: the emergence of major creeds such as Hinduism, Christianity and Islam led first to the study of religious texts and the teaching of literacy and ultimately in each case to the development of wider systems of schooling and scholarship. In most of the countries with which we are concerned here, one or more of these creeds have been established by mission, infiltration or conquest over an under-lying tradition of indigenous custom and religion; the schooling associated with each system of belief has followed. In the context of Africa, the Koranic school in Camara Laye's *L'enfant noir* and the Catholic mission school in Oyono's *Une vie de boy* illustrate this development.

Access to formal schooling for both boys and girls then has been influenced in many developing countries, both historically and geographically by the spread of religious movements and missions. Sierra Leone and Cameroon have similar patterns of Islamic influence in the north and the penetration of Christian missions inland from the coast in the west. Jamaica and Vanuatu both experienced the impact of rival Christian denominations establishing churches and schools *ad hoc* and leaving the legacy of an irregular spread of school provision for the State to rationalise in later years.

Despite their male authority figures, the Christian churches have been largely supportive of education for girls, even though initially it usually took second place to that of boys. This influence is partly responsible for the good record in girls' education in such places as Kerala in Southern India for example. Christian sects recognise the importance of the education of girls because they know they are educating the mothers who will teach and train the next generation of Christian children. This reason for Christian concern about female education may not have a great deal to do with notions of equality of opportunity or employment prospects, but the promotion of girls' education seems to have made the idea of schooling for girls more acceptable in areas influenced by Christian missions and at an earlier date than elsewhere.

Where Church schools have been nationalised and/or secularised and where state systems have grown up in symbiosis with mission schools, the general approach to girls' education has remained supportive. Despite this however, the strength of factors such as poverty, and older traditions, especially in rural areas, may still effect enrolment and retention figures for boys superior to those for girls.

The low enrolment figures for girls and the relatively negative attitudes to girls' education in Northern Sierra Leone, Northern Cameroon and rural Bangladesh were often explained to us simply in terms of the religious factor: they are all largely Muslim areas. They are also however areas which are traditional, rural and poor, and these factors as we have seen certainly contribute towards the problem. The daughters of elite Muslim families in Dhaka are participating successfully at all levels of the educational system but they have parents who are urban, relatively wealthy and themselves educated. In traditional villages Muslim fathers may religiously legitimise attitudes which are customary rather than matters of belief. Certainly the Koran does not discourage the education of girls. More overt support from local religious leaders would help to persuade parents to send their daughters to school. In addition, more female teachers, single-sex schools and secure accommodation where boarding is necessary might calm parental fears about the vulnerability of girls outside the home. Although parents everywhere are concerned about their daughters' safety, the degree of concern is very marked among many Muslim and Hindu parents in the regions studied, within the subcontinent.

Cultural and religious attitudes about the upbringing of girls may make the risk of physical and moral danger a particularly important factor in parental decisions not to allow girls past the age of puberty to go to school.

Another factor in the attraction of religiously based schools, especially for parents of girls, is the stability of such institutions and of their teaching staff. Good teachers are attracted by the prospect of better conditions of work and reliability of remuneration. Certainly both Christian and Islamic authorities have been instrumental in establishing secondary boarding schools for girls as well as for boys.

vi. Legal

The significance of the legal factor is mainly indirect but nonetheless real. This is because in terms of modern statutes equal status between the sexes normally obtains, legislation having been passed in accordance with international trends. In practice, however, there are still important areas where the law could be reformed further to encourage compliance and in some places women are still statutory minors! So in general there is a widespread need for strengthened legal support for females. In many traditional societies situations exist where disregard of the law is commonplace in ways that adversely affect opportunities for women and girls to participate in educational opportunities. Much of this type of problem results from continued adherence to traditional custom which normally favours males. Long standing societal rules forbidding female activity or constraining it are difficult to change, especially in rural communities dominated by men. There are also cases where discretion is applied in the enforcement of modern law, for example in respect of the age of marriage when all parties are in agreement.

Other areas where legal dimensions to the problem of modest female participation in formal education exist are, for example:

- in gaining justice and compensation for physical attack;
- in gaining support for coping with contracts in connection with paid employment and the ownership of property and/or land;
- in bringing pressure to bear on the authorities for the provision of full educational facilities in accordance with regulations;
- in gaining support for modern legal operations in respect of marriage, divorce and inheritance.

At present, illiteracy severely constrains the proper use of the law by women for their own best interests, and it might help to resolve the situation by developing more literacy schemes with associated legal dimensions for rural women. This might be further integrated with community development projects.

The issue of the employment of (young) children and especially girls should be reviewed in terms of current law and action taken where necessary.

The significance of the legal factor can be well illustrated by that strand of the work of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) that seeks to uphold the legal position of women in the context of the family, the world of work and physical security. Action taken by BRAC in this regard has significantly enhanced the status and strength of its educational initiatives on behalf of women and girls. This is an effort that could be made on behalf of many traditional communities elsewhere.

Support for the training of more women for the legal profession would probably encourage more rural women to challenge customary restrictions place upon them.

In general it is clear that failure to implement or enforce existing legislation continues to disadvantage females in many countries, including the cases represented here, and that the education system is itself part of the system of social regulation and control that often continues to permit a situation of gender bias.

vii. Political Administrative

This factor relates closely to some aspects of the geographical and legal factors. For example, the provision of education may be operated by a variety of political offices with different spatial and legal identities. In the Cameroons the macro division between the anglophone and francophone sectors results in two distinctive national systems of primary and secondary provision. Their relative influence, especially in relation to the political realities of higher education appears to have a marked effect on certain patterns of educational emigration. There is a long tradition of female exodus from the western provinces to colleges and universities in anglophone West Africa.

In federal states such as India, where there are also numerous other providers of education such as municipal councils in major cities, private trusts and religious organisations, competing rules and regulations overlap creating innumerable disparities, some of which have significance for the opportunities of girls. Such a situation makes coordination in order to deliver federal policy in respect of gender and education extremely difficult. In larger countries especially, there may be a reluctance to commit funds for initiatives to state or local bodies for fear of maladministration, even corruption. In many of the locations visited NGOS are being identified as the most appropriate vehicles for both internal and external aid to enhance female participation in education.

Even where suitable regulations exist there seems to be a widespread problem in respect of the quality of local administration in the educational services of most of the cases studied. It is not just the efficiency of dealing with routine administration, but the nature of the role of local officials that is constraining educational opportunities for both sexes, but especially for females in rural areas. If such officials are appropriately trained to act more as facilitators/animateurs, giving support to teachers and communities at the point of delivery, and if more women were trained for this type of work then more parents might be encouraged to permit their daughters to attend primary and secondary schools. This is not just a question of decentralisation, but of qualitative reform in local educational administration whether the locus of power in the system be federal, regional, municipal or at community level.

The supply and quality of teachers is obviously very important, and in areas where the enrolment and attendance of girls is deterred by the lack of female teachers, strong initiatives have to be adopted to attract them if a breakthrough is to be achieved. The policy of admitting females to teacher training courses with inferior entry qualifications as compared with their male colleagues could be counter productive, perhaps lowering the quality of the teaching force and antagonising male teachers at the same time. The morale and commitment of teachers, especially primary teachers in rural areas is even further reduced by lengthy delays in payment of salaries. Absenteeism becomes common in such circumstances and parents withdraw their support as they lose confidence in the utility and reliability of schooling.

Despite the widespread adoption of equal opportunity regulations and accompanying rhetoric, it would appear that in most of the cases there is a significant lack of real political will at the centres of power to adopt radical programmes designed to redress the gender imbalance. The creation of 'Womens' Ministries' does not seem to be the answer. They tend to be poorly funded and have low status in the hierarchy of real power. It would greatly enhance prospects of radical reorientation and extension if more women were enabled to play political roles. In some of the countries there is evidence of the beginning of such a trend, and in one (Vanuatu) there is a project designed to engender greater female participation in public life. This in turn would provide more visible role models for girls to emulate.

On the question of language policy - in many rural areas of developing countries, the local language will have little or no status, but is the only language of most mothers and their young children. If this is the case and the educational level of females is low then they are trapped. The resolution of such issues requires the application of real political will on the part of influential males in favour of their disadvantaged women.In general this is lacking.

viii. Educational

The educational factor is complex as it is in itself a product of the interaction of all the others. Consequently what is causal and what is consequential in educational terms in relation to female participation is difficult to distinguish.

In those countries where girls' enrolment is low, the literacy levels of mothers are also low. This low educational base among females diminishes the likelihood of daughters going to school and if they do, of being retained within the school system long enough to make it worthwhile.

In the primary sector despite schemes such as infant-level feeder schools and boarding facilities for upper primary classes, access still remains difficult for many children and as we have seen elsewhere, is more difficult for girls than for boys. The problem of female drop-out at primary level is not helped by the lack of female teachers (especially in rural areas) in countries such as India and Bangladesh. The absence of basic toilet facilities is also more serious for girls than for boys. Gender stereotyping in textbooks and readers reinforces the self-image girls acquire from the traditional attitudes of their communities. The system of repeating classes may also militate against girls in that parents may well think it worthwhile to support a boy repeating a year but will withdraw a girl. Where poor resources and teacher absenteeism (due to non-payment of salaries for months on end) make schooling a questionable investment for all children, it is girls whom parents seem most likely to withdraw. This is particularly because they are so useful at home, especially where the school-day and the school-year are unrelated to the realities of everyday life and to the agricultural cycle. The apparent irrelevance of the primary curriculum to the traditional role of the female is another factor which persuades parents to keep girls at home where they can acquire through informal education the traditional skills perceived as the only ones they will need as wives and mothers at home and in the village.

At the secondary level the problems for girls are even more severe. Incomplete systems, especially in rural areas, make access to school more difficult than at primary level. Distance to school has more implications for girls than for boys as we have seen above. The lack of female teachers and/or single-sex schooling becomes even more important for parents once girls have reached puberty and in some parts of Bangladesh for instance, girls have to attend boys' secondary schools. Teenage pregnancy and early marriage obviously affect drop-out at this age, but so do factors more intrinsic to the system such as availability of places, the lack of facilities and the costs of fees, uniforms, textbooks and transport. The stereo-typing of options at secondary and vocational schools also reinforces traditional views about girls' education. As one writer puts it: "the path to school for many girls is only a detour which leads them back to their traditional tasks in the home".

Where secondary schools offer only an academic type of course, and technical/vocational training opportunities elsewhere are scarce and often sex-stereotyped, there are few options for girls who are not academic high-flyers. The success and over-subscription of small-scale private and NGO ventures in providing technical and vocational training for girls in Sierra Leone, Jamaica and Cameroon, clearly indicate a need that should attract external support.

At university level, with the exception of Jamaica, where women students are beginning to out-number men, female participation becomes even lower. Urban and middle-class females, however, are beginning to compete well with males and over a wide range of subjects, including science, technology and engineering. The need for secure residential accommodation for females coming from distant or rural areas to university centres was stressed in both Cameroon and Bangladesh. The lack of female teachers in rural areas makes provision of this sort particularly important in initial teacher-training if rural women are to be encouraged to train to teach and return to their home areas. It is unfortunate that marriage to males in government service may keep trained women-teachers in the large conurbations when they are needed back in the provinces. This was particularly noticeable in Yaoundé and Dhaka.

The education systems and institutions of countries with low female participation can certainly do many things to encourage girls to enrol and to stay on at school, and not least they can influence the attitudes of the next generation of parents to their daughters. Our primary survey revealed that negative attitudes towards the education of girls are often well-established in 11 and 12-year-old children. Schools must ask themselves to what extent their ethos, teachers, textbooks and curriculum are sub-consciously reinforcing these attitudes.

ix. Initiatives

The problems facing females in respect of being able to participate in such educational opportunities are widespread and severe. Nonetheless, it would be wrong in a report such as this to overlook the considerable efforts that are being made in all countries visited, and in different ways, to confront various aspects of this problem. Some particular initiatives, specific to countries, are mentioned in the case studies below, but a few more general points about relevant initiatives here will serve to illustrate that there are positive factors at work too.

All the governments recognise that the problems of female participation in education at various levels are significant, and most have policy commitments to attempt resolutions. Unfortunately a combination of: pressure on priorities, a general lack of political will (most of the politicians are of course male), severe shortage of funds, and poor levels of staff and resources for the implementation of initiatives, acts to make for very slow progress. Nonetheless, one may mention any number of serious initiatives from governments that have the potential to improve the situation to some extent. For example, in India the Federal Government has launched Operation Blackboard in an attempt not only to bring primary schooling within the reach of all, but also to specifically target the female dimension by making regulations for the imperative of a female teacher alongside a male teacher in every rural location. Recognition of the need to attract and train more female primary teachers has led to initiatives by some governments to allow such trainees to enter the course with lower qualifications than males. A case can be made for this, but there are strong arguments against, including the potentially damaging effect on the status of women. Some governments, notably in India, have established projects to free school texts of gender bias

Some governments operate feeding schemes to help overcome problems of malnutrition and to attract increased enrolment at primary level. Where Women's Ministries/Bureaux have been established, they do increase the visibility of the issue and provide new role models, but in practice are often underfunded in comparison with other Ministries and have little real power. There is also a danger of any problems associated with females being directed towards this Ministry, which can be extremely counterproductive in terms of the vital interests of in effect at least 50 per cent of the population.

Because of the problems faced by governments in addressing this issue, most of the effective initiatives are being carried out by NGOs with external funding. One such initiative, the primary schools of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) provides an excellent model that could be replicated almost anywhere in the rural sector of developing countries. The strength of this scheme is that it works from within each village community and recognises the particular needs and problems of that community. It is realistic and successful. Other NGOs have similar schemes both in Bangladesh and elsewhere, and the more successful have, like BRAC, associated their primary education initiatives with ongoing community development schemes which include the enhancement of literacy levels and income generation prospects for rural women.

NGOs are also involved in addressing the crucial problem of enabling girls, especially in rural areas, to progress to the secondary sector, which often involves the construction of new facilities sometimes with a boarding component, as well as providing scholarships to cover fees, uniforms, books and other necessary expenses. Initiatives by religious bodies are also significant at this level.

The field of technical/vocational education for adolescents and young adults is clearly becoming increasingly significant in all countries and although few initiatives were evident, the excellent work of OIC in Buea, Cameroon and of the YWCA in Jamaica provide workable models worthy of consideration elsewhere.

Early pregnancy is a widespread problem, often terminating a promising educational career. Initiatives to assist teenage girls to cope both with their baby and with the continuation of their schooling, such as the Crisis Centres in Jamaica, are to be commended.

Problems facing Ministries or other Government Departments set up to look after the problems of women and girls have been noted. But there are also unofficial though recognised agencies that have been set up in all the countries concerned to assist women in need. Sisteren in Jamaica is a good example. Although not an educational movement in the formal and limited sense, it does employ imaginative learning techniques through art and drama that successfully reach the grass roots, providing ideas, support and information to females of all ages.

It will be noted that several worthwhile initiatives selected for special mention came from Jamaica, where, despite the matriarchal system and the strong educational profile of girls, there are still some severe problems for certain female groups. But at least the position of women in general there provides a degree of experience and confidence much needed by their counterparts elsewhere. Yet even in Jamaica the problem of male hegemony still obtains, though the vital significance of education in supporting women's development, especially in the modern sector, is recognised. So there is still a need for more women to become active politically, which is where the final initiative selected comes in. The Vanuatu Council of Women has developed programmes to impart basic political skills and confidence to women to enable them to participate successfully in running meetings and committees at local level.

e) Conclusion

In the general report section of this document an attempt has been made to synthesise the influence of the various factors with which the project is concerned, to outline the scope of the exercise and the methodology involved. In general the policy has been not to highlight particular cases because such information is laid out in the case-study section below. Neither have we given many recommendations in this section, because they are listed both in the executive summary above and in the cases below.

Much of what we have found reinforces the knowledge that the problem of relative lack of female participation in education in developing countries is vast, almost universal, but we have also found that it is not intractable and that significant and progressive movement has occurred in many areas for at least a decade or two. Such momentum should be maintained, and we hope that the recommendations we have made as a result of the privilege of making this study will commend themselves to those with powers of decision-making and funding both in developing countries and in aid agencies.

5. CASESTUDIES

5.1 THE CASE OF BANGLADESH

A. CONTEXT

a. General

Bangladesh is a republic formed in 1972, following a war of independence with Pakistan, of which it had formed the eastern component since the foundation of that country in 1947. During the period of British colonial control this area was known as East Bengal and there is some ethnic and linguistic affinity with West Bengal, the neighbouring State of the Indian Federation.

Much of Bangladesh comprises part of the Ganges/Brahmaputra lower plains and delta and is subject to severe annual flooding caused by both Himalayan thaw and monsoon cyclones. Coincidence with high tides in the Bay of Bengal causes massive devastation and disaster for scores of millions of rural Bangladeshis, including the demolition of any schools they may have. Around the periphery of the country is a broken zone of higher ground which becomes the normal environment for the south-east sector which around Chittagong experiences some of the highest precipitation of rainfall in the world. The vast majority of the population (about 80 per cent) is Islamic and Bangla speaking, but there is a significant Hindu minority (about 10 per cent) and also tribal groups in the hill regions. The capital, Dhaka, is very much the primate city and the focus of the modest secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy, the majority of which consists of subsistence agriculture. The overall population density is well over 500 per square kilometre, with about 90 per cent being rural.

Bangladesh is placed in the lowest category of countries by international economic classification, with a per capita income of less that $US200 pa and could well be the poorest country in the world. Consequently its economic survival depends absolutely on international aid, and this includes such capacity as exists to provide education from public funds.

The linguistic dimension and its educational considerations has had considerable influence on political developments. During the British colonial period, English was strongly acquired by the elite which favoured that medium and utilised private and international avenues of educational advancement that still operate today. Under Pakistan rule there was an attempt to impose Urdu in schools which was vigorously opposed by the indigenous population and was a key issue in the thrust for an independent state. Having gained that independence in 1972, there was a strong Bangla policy in respect of schooling which led to the decline of English, though in recent years this has been relaxed. However, the majority of the population and especially of the females remain illiterate in either medium.

b. Education

The diagram below (Cowen and McLean 1984, p 80) illustrates the educational system of Bangladesh. The pupils surveyed were in the top class of the primary cycle with the exception of the children at the BRAC school, which offered two years of basic education to pupils who tended to be older than those in the government schools.

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF BANGLADESH

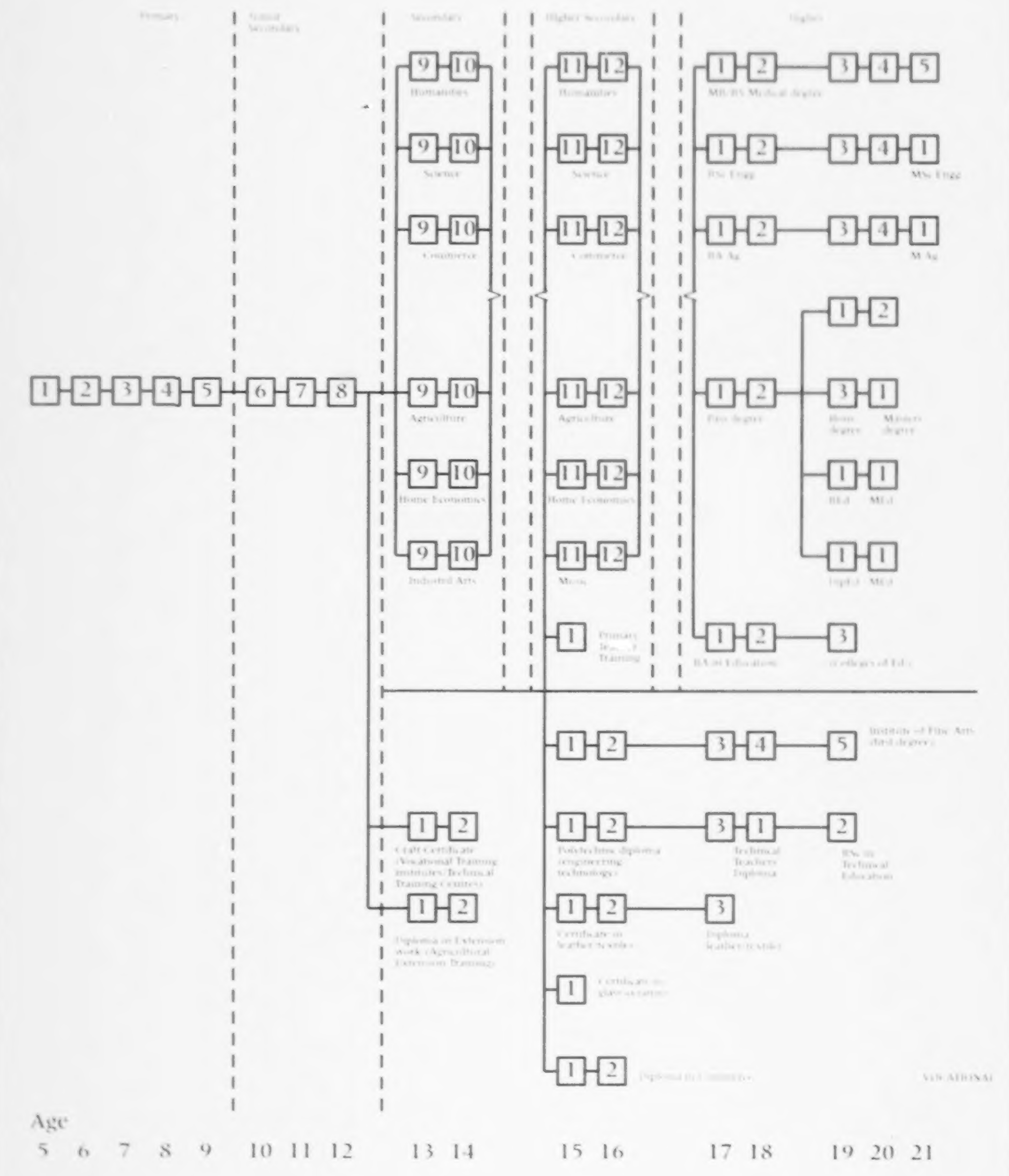

Table 1 below gives an indication of the percentages of boys and girls enrolled in primary schools over the period 1951 - 1985. There has been much improvement but the percentage of girls out of school was still 62% in 1985.

Table 1

Age Group Population and Participation Rate at the Primary Level in Bangladesh

Year	Sex	Age-group population	Enrolment	%	Out of school population	%
1951	Male	4,102,326	1,964,414	48	2,137,912	52
	Female	3,799,003	485,022	13	3,314,001	87
1961	Male	4,868,687	2,568,278	53	2,300,403	47
	Female	4,660,743	958,451	21	3,702,298	73
1975	Male	7,140,328	4,714,000	66	2,897,829	34
	Female	6,901,046	2,739,000	40	4,441,745	60
1985	Male	9,217,860	6,714,000	73	2,686,760	27
	Female	8,905,550	3,415,000	38	3,743,650	62

(Source: S. Islam Women's education in Bangladesh: needs and issues, FREPD, Dhaka 1982, p 50)

A similar comparison at secondary level (Table 2) reveals an even wider gap between girls' and boys' enrolment figures.

Table 2

Age-group Population and Participation at the Secondary Level in Bangladesh

Year	Sex	Age-group population	Enrolment	%	Out of school population	%
1951	Male	2,174,013	259,216	12	1,914,737	88
	Female	1,663,564	9,009	0.5	1,654,555	99.5
1961	Male	2,610,351	433,079	17	2,176,672	83
	Female	2,036,533	39,826	2	1,996,707	98
1975	Male	4,986,950	1,505,010	30	3,481,940	70
	Female	4,723,450	457,450	10	4,266,000	90
1985	Male	6,435,467	2,723,100	42	3,712,367	58
	Female	6,084,766	1,170,000	19	4,924,766	81

(Source: S. Islam, ibid, p75)

The latest figures available at the time of our visit were those for 1988 (Table 3) and show a primary school teaching force of 33,774 females and 153,098 males. Pupils number 11,285,445 but there are only 4,943,119 girls to 6,342,326 boys. Girls' enrolment drops from one and a half million in Class 1 to 590,000 in Class 5.

Table 3

Number of Primary Schools, Teachers and Students
by Management and Sex, 1988

Management	Number of Institutions	Number of Teachers		Number of Students	
		Total	Female	Total	Female
Government	37,681	157,663	28,294	9,750,581	4,281,615
Non-Government	7,765*	29,209	5,480	1,534,864	661,504
Total:	45,383	186,872	33,774	11,285,445	4,943,119

*Of these only 4,414 schools are registered.

(Source: Ministry of Education Handbook on Educational Statistics of Bangladesh. BANBEIS. Dhaka 1989, p 1-3)

Secondary school enrolment follows a similar pattern as can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4

Secondary Schools Enrolment by Grade and Sex, 1988

Year/Grade	Sex	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Total
1988	Total	729962	673811	589589	449207	364978	2,807547
	Girls	269161	232036	194910	129940	102096	928143

(Source: Ministry of Education, ibid, p 6)

c. Primary Perceptions

In Bangladesh the number of pupils surveyed was curtailed by the incidence of public holidays and a strike, but the schools visited provided a useful range. They included a rural school established by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), a Government semi-rural primary school, and an urban one where the shifts were arranged by sex and we worked with a class of girls. Our 100 respondents then were mainly female, although there were some boys at the rural schools visited. The age range in the classes included in the survey was 8-15 years, but all the older children were in the rural schools.

Among rural pupils, all the boys were involved in helping in the fields, but very few of the girls. Sweeping, fetching water and preparing food were however very much girls' tasks. The care of siblings seemed to be one for either sex. As might be expected from the traditions of the country, it is the boys who go to the market, rarely girls. Among the urban elite girls, 70 per cent never go to the store or market. There was a high degree of consensus that girls help at home more than boys. but among both girls and boys in rural areas an alarming 92 per cent said that they sometimes miss school because they have to help at home and over 50 per cent said that it is difficult to go to school every day. These were by far the highest scores in any country or type of location in the survey. Even among elite urban girls 43 per cent were sometimes missing school to help at home.

As far as attitude was concerned 85 per cent of the rural children thought that girls need to go to school as much as boys. However, 38 per cent (half of the boys and a third of the girls) agreed that "Girls don't really need to go to school". This proposition was strongly refuted by the single-sex class of urban girls.

Both rural and urban pupils strongly wished (97 per cent) that school were nearer to their homes. Fathers appeared to be very supportive of both sons' and daughters' education but rural mothers were less sure about it apparently - only 77 per cent of the rural children (by far the lowest in the survey) agreed that "My mother wants me to come to school very much" And this is despite the fact that in the rural schools we were looking at the children of relatively well-off and literate families with 82 per cent of their mothers said to be "good at reading and writing". Second only to rural Vanuatu, 41 per cent of the rural children expected to leave school at the end of the year, although like children in the other countries in the survey, over 90 per cent would like to go to secondary school.

Only 74 per cent of the rural pupils said they intended to marry and 80 per cent of the urban girls. It is striking that there is almost 100 per cent agreement that 0-2 boys and 0-2 girls would be their ideal family. Bangladesh, along with India, seems to have successfully persuaded its young people, in theory at least, that they should have smaller families. Children in Cameroon, Jamaica and Vanuatu are far less restrained in their plans.

Girls' career preferences in Bangladesh were the most limited in the survey: rural girls opted for 'doctor' or 'teacher' almost without exception and 88 per cent of the urban girls said they wanted to be doctors. The lack of range in career preferences would appear to be linked to the lack of role models for the girls: only a tiny percentage of their mothers were working outside the home.

B. FACTORS

i. Geographical

At the local scale in rural Bangladesh the issues of female security and access to primary schooling combine to the extent that a distance of more than 2 kilometres can prevent female take-up of primary schooling. Indeed the percentage of children wishing schools were nearer to their homes was 95% in the rural Bangladesh schools surveyed: the highest in any of the countries visited.

On the larger scale the incompleteness of the schooling network, leading to marked disparities in the distribution of educational opportunity; the tendency for the poorer teachers to be on the periphery of the system where access is most difficult; the concentration of single sex schooling and related accommodation in urban areas, the physical disruption of the rainy season with its increased costs of access to school by water, all combine to operate against the educational interests of rural girls to a greater extent than their male counterparts.

The rural/urban imbalance in provision, enrolment, drop-out and female literacy rates is very striking.

ii. Socio-Cultural

Societal norms, especially parental attitudes, are key pressures in this case, and operate against the educational progress of girls and women to different degrees in each of the four main components of the population: the rural poor (constituting the vast majority); the rural elite; the urban poor; the urban elite. The rural/urban dichotomy is stark and extreme.

There is a fundamental cultural bias in favour of males which is most effective in the poor majority. Rural girls are confined to the village and as far as possible to the individual home. This is partly for their safety and security in view of the widespread fear of violent and sexual assault upon the female person. Should a girl be violated, then not only would this be a personal tragedy, but also an economic setback for the family as the prospects of marriage would have been significantly damaged. Hence the strict security and early betrothal which is endemic and which further constrain a girl's chances of schooling. Being so confined to the home, the majority of Bangladeshi girls are likely to be more affected than their brothers by the extremely low levels of literacy obtaining among adult females. A combination of very hard physical labour and poor diet means that the minority of girls who do get to travel to government schools, are often not in a fit state to respond to the educational challenge which, in the form in which it is provided, is largely alien to their immediate needs. In any case, in the context outlined above, the majority of teachers will be male, and as such unacceptable to the parents of girls. Female teachers are rare in government rural schools because, for the same reason, few girls from such an environment would have proceeded through the system to the level of teacher training, and urban females would not wish to work in the countryside for reasons of security and lack of facilities.

In the rural locations then, it is not enough simply to provide a school as girls will not necessarily attend it. When poverty forces a choice between a boy and a girl going to school, the boy will have preference. Boys have far more importance than girls and in fact the high birth-rate to a certain extent is the result of parents trying to get sons and enough of them to ensure that at least some survive. A girl, despite her contribution to domestic work, is regarded as a burden in terms of dowry and as too transitory to be worth investment in her education- in some villages all girls over 12 are married. The prolonged cycle of child bearing of her mother, the large number of siblings and the burden of domestic and agricultural tasks ensure that a girl is likely to be kept at home to help rather than sent to school. Seclusion in the past has been a middle-class/elite phenomenon: the rural poor cannot afford it but there is still a tendency to think that "the home is the most respectable place for a woman". Girls do not go to the shop or market; boys do. These deep-rooted attitudes combine with more pressing economic factors in making decisions about whether a rural girl will go to school or not.

Among the urban middle classes the education of daughters is now encouraged and indeed has flourished in recent decades, especially in Dhaka. Such girls are achieving very highly across the whole range of subjects up to and including university levels, including the so called areas of male preserve such as engineering science. Indeed there is a surplus of female professionals, including teachers, in the cities. However, even the educated female elite suffers discrimination when it comes to promotion to positions of some power and influence. In all the sectors of society mentioned above, it is still the attitude of fathers that is the key to female opportunities in education.

iii. Health

This factor was surprisingly rarely mentioned by professionals and students, but it was identified by parents. Two dimensions are readily apparent. First there is the general medical effect of living in conditions of severe poverty, and the particular point of the extra malnutrition of girls due to the preference given to boys and men. Many rural children reach school hungry and this adversely affects their performance. There is apparently no government food programme for schools as found in some corresponding countries.

The malnutrition of girls, their lower resistance to disease and their higher mortality rate are obvious causes of concern. When survival is the issue, education must take second place.

Secondly, there is the area of birth control and the particular issues of 'young' pregnancies and their physical and social effects. The work of the Asia Foundation's population programme in Bangladesh has shown that help in providing secondary schooling for individual girls can have a distinct retarding effect on the age of marriage, the age of first birth and the exit of females from formal education. We strongly recommend it.

The family size amongst the children surveyed was as follows:-

1 - 3 children 33.3%
4 - 6 children 54.1%
7 - 9 children 12.6%

The children's own ideas about their future offspring showed that their plans are for much smaller families, not only in the elite urban groups where this might be expected, but also in poorer rural ones where the work of BRAC is obviously having an influence.

iv. Economic

The socio-economic status of parents seems to be the crucial factor in deciding whether girls go to school or not. It is poverty which is the main hurdle.

Costs are both direct and hidden, leading parents to favour the education of boys rather than girls, that is if any of their children are to attend school. The pressures of poverty are extreme and, given the patrilocal system obtaining, investment in a girl's schooling tends to be seen as a loss since any benefit would accrue to her husband's family. Furthermore, in advance of marriage, the girl's labour would be needed at home in traditional female roles. If school is attended then direct costs arise in respect of such aspects as books and other materials, appropriate clothing, and transportation by water in the severe rainy season.

In rural areas girls' labour in the home and on the farm is an economic necessity because it frees others to earn outside, and is valuable to the mother in terms of coping with a 5.00 am - 10.00 pm day of "life-long invisible work". Girls and women are unpaid family labourers. The collection of water and firewood are heavy jobs and recent more intensive cropping by men has led to more post-harvest work for women. Many mothers cannot spare their daughters for schooling. Wage-work for cash may also be essential to the survival of the family but this tends to involve boys more than girls. In urban areas girls are surrogate mothers, freeing women to work outside the home. The survey revealed that 92% of the pupils involved sometimes could not attend school because they had to do jobs for their mothers and fathers. This was the highest percentage in any country, and shows that helping at home radically affects not only initial enrolment but also attendance by those children who do go to school. It also affects drop-out as the school terms clash with the agricultural cycles and those who miss school over several weeks drop behind, despair and ultimately abandon school.

Traditional outside jobs for girls and women such as rice-milling are declining because of mechanisation and even in low socio-economic groups men prefer women to take on jobs which can be done at home. Learning skills which can help them to work outside the home would assist women not only economically, but lead to them taking more part in decision-making and having more freedom of movement and experience of holding and handling money, all of which would have positive implications for their daughters.

v. Religious

Among the various people interviewed or surveyed, religion was not reckoned to be a direct factor of any significance to the issue of female educational opportunity. However, it is invoked by some of those who wish to constrain such opportunity, so that it operates implicitly through perceived norms. In view of the fact that there is no religious constraint in this respect, it would be helpful if religious leaders were to espouse the cause of girls' education, for there can be no significant development in Bangladesh without it.

vi. Legal

Like health, this factor was hardly raised by respondents but it is also significant. Legal norms assume a woman to be dependent and therefore to have no need for access to income or property in her own right. Women remain statutory minors. Illiterate women with no knowledge of the law are helpless in the face of injustice.

The question of dowry for instance has become increasingly important as economic conditions have worsened: dowry violence is on the increase. A wife however has little legal redress when things go wrong.

Another issue relates to early marriage. The law relating to the minimum age of marriage might be strengthened in some way. Also more women should become conversant with the interpretation and formulation of letters with legal intent. At present, safeguards against the misuse or neglect of existing legislation, especially in the area of physical abuse, seem very difficult to operate.

vii. Political/Administrative

Informants complained of lack of real political will in respect of supporting educational development in general and that of girls in particular, despite the good intentions expressed in Educational Plans over the years. One of the problems of access for girls is that the system is far from complete. Many villages have no primary school which makes the need to travel too big a barrier for most boys and girls of school age. A five year system of UPE has been pronounced for achievement by 2000 AD. In the meantime certain initiatives have been taken by the government to encourage greater female participation, for example: free schooling for girls up to the age of 8; lower entry requirements for women to certain programmes of teacher training; a cooperative attitude to NGOs working on projects to promote female participation. Nonetheless there is no real push at secondary level in this direction.

While there may be strong central government, the extremely weak nature of local administration means that such initiatives as may be attempted are ineffective in practice. Among the short-comings are the lack of effective supervision of primary teachers, which in turn increases parental concern and caution. Weak local administration also fails to check the traditional power of rural elites who in general do not support the raising of the level of awareness of the rural masses, including the perception of potential benefits arising from increased educational opportunities for girls.

viii. Education

"My mother wants me to come to school very much" - only 77% of the rural children in the survey agreed with this statement: the lowest percentage in any of the countries studied.

"Girls don't really need to go to school" - 38% of the rural children agreed with this, one of the highest scores in the survey, despite the fact that a BRAC school was in existence and influencing attitudes to girls' education in the area.

There is no doubt that the shortcomings highlighted by the educational profile of Bangladesh show that this factor is itself significant in the constraint of female participation in schooling. Most fundamental is the low level of literacy, particularly among adult rural females, most of whom are mothers. This must affect the educational potential of both male and female children, but the mother additionally acts as a role model for the girls and the fact that they are confined to the home and its immediate environs means that their male counterparts are likely to enjoy a richer experience albeit within a largely illiterate setting.

Textbooks themselves militate against improved attitudes towards girls' status and education by the invisibility of women in texts and by the low social value of women presented when they do appear.

The incompleteness of the system, its limited relevance to the short-term survival imperative, its extremely poor amenities (there are often no separate toilets for girls which is another factor causing their absence), the high incidence of mismanagement at local level and absenteeism by (male) teachers all combine to have a negative effect on the issue in question.

There are not enough single sex schools at secondary level to encourage parents to permit their daughters to attend, and the schedule and hours of government schools are at odds with the economic and ecological cycle of rural communities. Greater flexibility is needed if the figure of at least 50% dropout of girls during years 1 and 2 in some areas is to be reduced. Despite the initiative in respect of attracting female entrants to teaching by lowering entry requirements, there are still many thousands more primary teachers needed over the next decade if the achievement of UPE is to have any real meaning.

As far as secondary education is concerned there is a real need for incentives in the form of scholarships for girls, particularly the rural ones, and for the provision of safe hostel facilities.

ix. Initiatives

Bangladesh seems to be fertile ground for national and international projects in education, some of which have a direct bearing on the educational prospects of women and girls.

Among these the pioneering work of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is outstanding and provides a possible model for a national scale assault on the problem of girls' educational opportunities. The work of BRAC is so well known that no further comment will be made on it other than that the writers strongly recommend the model.

- The Asia Foundation/USAID population project including enhancement of secondary education for girls has been mentioned above.

- Very useful research on education in Bangladesh, including the gender factor is undertaken by FREPD, there is a primary teacher training thrust under government auspices and a UNESCO backed national-scale curriculum and textbook programme at the NCTBB. There are numerous other NGOs in the field.

- The Women's Ministry project currently funded by NORAD, which links with BRAC in its education components, illustrates well the need to operate on a broad front, making sure that education is not isolated. Here it is integrated with issues concerning health, nutrition and family planning and operates in every province of the country.

- The government's plans include more scholarships for girls, more ITT places and hostel accommodation for women, the placing of more women teachers in primary schools, and a relaxation of qualification requirements for intending women teachers.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our major recommendations (not necessarily in order of priority) would be:

i. that support be given to BRAC to enable its primary non-formal education work to expand educationally and geographically.

ii. that special consideration be given to the articulation between primary and secondary schooling with a view to encouraging the products of BRAC and similar schemes to continue their schooling. This could involve the provision of new secondary schools with adequate residential facilities for girls in particular.

iii. we were particularly impressed by the Asia Foundation Scholarship Scheme for promoting girls' secondary education and would enthusiastically approve support given to this or similar schemes.

iv. that, in rural areas in particular, aid for scholarships for girls to attend secondary schools be provided.

v. that consideration be given to funding a pilot scheme of new single-sex secondary schools for girls with safe hostel facilities for both pupils and female teachers.

vi. that incentives be increased such as abolition of fees, provision of free uniforms, books and meals.

vii. that support be considered for feeding schemes in primary and secondary schools where such a facility might encourage and enable the poorest families to send their boys and girls to school.

viii. that support be given to assist the further integration of the products of the work of NGOs in this area and the government's scheme of education and training.

ix. that support to similar NGOs working with the education of rural women be considered, especially where the work is similar to that of BRAC.

x. that text-book revision/development schemes should be encouraged where particular attention could be paid to how girls and women are presented in texts and illustrations in school books. The influence of school materials on the ideas and attitudes of both boys and girls could be an important factor in how the next generation of female children participate in education: today's pupils are tomorrow's parents.

xi. that initiatives be encouraged to develop technical and vocational education for both sexes especially, but not exclusively, as a 'second chance' for dropouts from formal schooling.

xii. that Bangladesh be assisted in reviewing and expanding its system of teacher-training, especially for primary school work.

xiii. that assistance be provided to enable the school day and the school year to be adjusted to the realities of rural life and the demands of rural economies.

xiv. that consideration be given to providing secure residential accommodation for female teachers, especially in rural areas.

xv. there is a need to improve the level of educational policy implementation at the local level in Bangladesh. This would involve the training of considerable numbers of personnel in systems of implementation and delivery. Their role in the implementation of policy would be a practical one of animation, advice and support rather than mere administration. The opportunity could be taken to train a significant number of women in this work.

xvi. that support be considered for rationalising the provision of schooling in Dhaka where rapid urbanisation may be adding to already complex patterns of demand.

xvii. although health was not a factor perceived by many respondents to be influential, it is in fact almost certainly affecting the educational well-being of girls in particular, so some kind of integrated operation linking medicine, educational and economic development in an integrated way could be considered and piloted. Successful schemes already established have the following characteristics: the provision of text-books, materials and stationery, female aides to accompany girls to school, school lunch programmes and free medical facilities.
The nutrition and health of girls is an area for priority action within any educational programme.

xviii. that further assistance be considered for improving the standards of traditional agricultural practice especially where this will enhance the experience, status and income of females.

xix. that, especially in rural communities, projects should be developed combining pre-school initiatives with income generation and basic literacy and numeracy skills for rural women.

xx. that efforts be made to raise the level of male awareness of the community and family economic benefits likely to arise from increased participation of women and girls in educational and income generation activity.

5.2 THE CASE OF CAMEROON

A. CONTEXT

a. General

The United Republic of Cameroon/République Unie du Cameroun took its present form in 1961, following the readjustment of the border with Nigeria by which some former territory was ceded. However, not all the anglophone regions transferred, and the present republic comprises anglophone provinces and francophone provinces. Beneath this anglo-gallic overlay there is a complex pattern of tribal cultures and languages and some remnants of the earlier German colonial legacy.

Environmentally, Cameroon is often referred to as 'Africa in miniature', as its ecological zones range from the Sahara Desert in the north to equatorial forest in the south. Hence the varied human response and adaptation and the resulting complex of cultures. Outside of the arid regions the soils are generally supportive, though for the size of the country the population total (about 10 million), and the overall density (about 14 per square kilometre) are very modest. However, the current rate of population increase is extremely high. There are several significant urban clusters associated with administrative and economic developments, notably the elevated inland capital Yaoundé, the major port of Douala and the prime anglophone centres of Bamenda and Buea. Corridors of modernisation have developed along major routes between these centres, encouraging urbanisation, possibly at the expense of rural societies and economies.

With well developed export agriculture and certain mineral resources, especially petroleum, the economy of the Cameroons has been among the healthiest in Africa until the last few years. Having both British and French links still strong and with needy neighbours, there has been a diversified trading position, but a notable decline is evident in the economy. Furthermore, the distribution of wealth would seem to be somewhat limited, with a per capita income of only about $US600 pa, placing the country in the lower range of the middle income group of developing countries, despite the existence of a substantial middle class.

Religious affiliations have some educational significance in that both Christian and Islamic organisations have played their part in the provision of schooling. This means that Arabic is added to the list of significant languages especially in the north. There is a broad association between Protestant Christian approaches and anglophone colonial legacies in the NW and SW provinces, and between Roman Catholic and francophone traditions elsewhere. Because of a massive migration into Central Province and Yaoundé in particular, the social geography of the capital is very complex with related educational implications.

b. Education

The diagram overleaf (T N Postlethwaite, 1988) shows the parallel anglophone and francophone systems of education in Cameroon. The pupils surveyed were in Primary 7 (anglophone) and CM2 (francophone).

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF CAMEROON

Average Age	Year of School	Anglophone System	Francophone System	
26	21	Doctorate	*Doctorat*	Higher education
25	20	Masters	*Maitrise*	
24	19	Postgraduate	*Diplome d' études supérieures*	
23	18			
22	17	First degree	*Licence*	
21	16	Advanced teachers	*Ecole normale supérieure*	
20	15	Advanced Technical Training	*Grandes écoles*	
19	14	7 High school: - grammar		Secondary education
18	13	6 - technical Teacher training	T- *2^{e} cycle lycée enseigement:*	
17	12	5 Secondary:	*1^{e} - général* *- technique* *2^{e} Ecole normale*	
16	11	4 - grammar - technical		
15	10	3 - teacher training	*3^{e} 1er cycle lycée* *4^{e} Collège d'enseigement:* *- général* *- technique*	
14	9	2		
13	8	1	*5^{e} Ecole normale*	
12	7	7		Primary education
11	6	6	CM^{2}	
10	5	5	CM^{1}	
9	4	4	CE^{2}	
8	3	3	CE^{1}	
7	2	2	CP	
6	1	1	CI	
				Kindergarten or nursery education

Table 1

Primary Education in Selected Regions 1985-86

	CENTRE		SOUTH-WEST		FAR NORTH	
	B	G	B	G	B	G
Class I/CI	36,505	36,150	10,217	9,593	32,886	17,434
Class 2/CP	26,768	26,070	17,574	16,521	21,029	9,645
Class 3/CEI	30,784	29,869	13,382	12,949	20,768	8,606
Class 4/CE2	22,623	22,691	13,362	12,369	13,073	4,436
Class 5/CMI	22,452	22,379	12,139	11,323	11,269	2,729
Class 6/CM2	20,044	18,784	11,311	10,382	10,668	2,122
Class 7	155*	188*	7,335	6,028	—	—

*Anglophone classes in Yaoundé.

Statistics for Tables 1 and 2 based on Données générales de la scolarisation au Cameroun, Année scolaire 1985-6 Ministère de l'Education Nationale, Yaoundé, 1989.

Table 1 illustrates clearly the drop-out during the primary cycle and contrasts three regions: Central, South-West and the Far North. The figures for the Far North show a high degree of wastage, particularly where girls are concerned. The general level of female participation in education in Cameroon at the various levels when compared with that of boys can be seen in Table 2. It is particularly interesting to note how the gap widens as the pupils proceed through the system, the degree to which classes are repeated, and the ratio of male to female teachers.

Table 2 Figures for 1985 - 1986 Republic of Cameroon

SECTOR		PUPILS			REPEATERS			TEACHERS	
		B	G	T	B	G	T	M	F
NURSERY	Public	21,320	20,808	42,128	——	——	——	——	1,711
	Private	16,408	14,970	31,378	——	——	——	10	733
	Total	37,728	35,778	73,506	——	——	——	10	2,444
PRIMARY	Public	627,840	500,719	1,128,559	202,860	154,656	357,516	29,433	6,376
	Private	229,658	277,101	576,760	75,118	66,860	141,978	4,828	2,617
	Total	927,499	777,820	1,705,319	277,978	221,516	499,494	24,605	8,993
GENERAL SECONDARY	Public	86,710	45,013	131,723	13,813	8,433	22,246	3,420	1,066
	Private	73,716	51,014	124,730	16,000	10,374	26,374	2,519	505
	Total	160,426	96,027	256,453	29,813	18,807	48,620	5,939	1,571
TECHNICAL SECONDARY	Public	14,995	7,592	22,587	2,482	1,410	3,892	1,022	488
	Private	33,671	26,961	60,632	4,597	3,844	8,441	1,252	362
	Total	48,666	34,553	83,219	7,079	5,254	12,333	2,274	810
TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES	Public	2,267	1,591	3,858	186	110	296	372	112
	Private	99	101	200	——	——	——	15	3
	Total	2,366	1,692	4,058	186	110	296	387	115

c. Primary Perceptions

In Cameroon, 320 pupils (177 boys and 143 girls) were surveyed in both anglophone and francophone schools, in Yaoundé the capital, in villages in South-Central and North-Western provinces, and on the coast. The age-range in the final year of primary school ranged from 9-18, although the over-age pupils were found mainly in the rural schools. Late enrolment and repeating classes were both contributing to the high age profile in several schools. Average class-size was larger in Cameroon than in the other countries visited. Classes with 70-90 pupils on roll were not uncommon.

Survey results suggest that both boys and girls are equally involved in agricultural work in rural areas except, significantly, in the north where girls help less. Both sexes are also very involved in fetching water and caring for siblings, but particularly the girls. Involvement in the preparation of food was statistically significant for girls as compared with boys everywhere, except among elite anglophone families in Yaoundé. Boys and girls were equally involved and to a high degree in tasks such as sweeping. They went in equal numbers to the market or store except, again, in the north where it was more likely to be the boys who went. Although 88 per cent agreed that girls help at home more than boys, consensus was more general in the rural areas where girls are still playing a more traditional role. In urban areas the numbers of children saying they sometimes missed school because of doing jobs at home were low but 77 per cent of our anglophone pupils in the North-West and coastal areas said this sometimes happened to them. This percentage was exceeded only in the rural Bangladesh and rural Sierra Leone samples.

Only 63 per cent of the pupils surveyed agreed that "girls need to go to school as much as boys" and 27 per cent (mainly boys) went so far as to agree that "girls don't really need to go to school". Negative attitudes were generally strongest in the north and in rural areas, as one might expect, but were surprisingly high in the francophone survey schools in and near the capital.

In the various regions between 91-98 per cent of the pupils surveyed intended to marry. These Cameroonian pupils, particularly those in rural areas, wanted large families when they grew up. In the case of boy-children, the numbers were also high in urban areas. Indeed, the future family sizes imagined for themselves by these prospective mothers and fathers were by far the largest in the survey and reflect the high number of brothers and sisters they themselves have. The families of the pupils surveyed were again the largest in any of the countries studied (1-3 children: 9.3 per cent; 4-6 children: 49.5 per cent; 7-9 children: 36 per cent; 10 or more, 5.2 per cent). There was no statistical difference between the anglophone and francophone groups in this respect.

Career choices as in other countries reflected the breadth and sophistication of choice of urban pupils as compared with rural ones and the more restricted range of choice among girls whether urban or rural. It was noted that a very high proportion of the pupils' mothers were working outside the home whether in professional or government jobs among the urban elite or in subsistence farming or trading in rural areas.

B. FACTORS

i. Geographical

Cameroon is a mosaic of differing cultures, languages and religions, united only by the accident of colonial history. There is therefore great diversity in traditional attitudes towards women and girls and still today it is difficult to generalise about problems of female participation in education because of this diversity. Another factor which has added to this regional disparity is the geographical aspect of the educational penetration of the country by the various Christian missions: first in developing boys' education and later that for girls, the missions worked inwards from the coast. The north and east of Cameroon therefore are underdeveloped educationally even today, especially where girls are concerned. In 1955 primary enrolment was 6% in the north and 86% in the south-central province; the gap is smaller today but has not yet been closed.

In addition to local cultural variations, the major division of the Cameroons into anglophone and francophone areas is a significant one in that the relative neglect of the western regions has, over the last two decades led to the take-up of anglophone educational opportunities by both males and females in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Ghana.

To compound this situation there is also the disparity between rural and urban areas in all parts of the country. Aspects of this dichotomy which affect the role, status and education of females include polygamy (declining more slowly in rural areas than in the towns), whether mothers work outside the home (26% in one rural school in the survey and 78% in a Yaoundé school) and family size, which although large in all parts of Cameroon, is bigger in rural areas and judging by children's plans as to their future families, is likely to remain so.

There was a strong school location policy in the west pre-unification, so that the network is well developed there, though the more recent policy of concentrating schools near the Nigerian border is deforming it to some degree. Here as elsewhere the disparities and gaps occur more at secondary level, where in some places girls cannot reach schools without living away from home, which is not acceptable to most parents (a 40-mile catchment radius is used by the authorities in planning secondary locations). As secondary participation becomes strained, it is the poorer families whose girls lose out as the economic factor emerges. There is certainly a need for more secondary boarding facilities.

At the primary level the potential problem of distance between home and school does not normally arise, although there is still a problem in the far north, particularly among nomadic groups.

ii. Socio-Cultural

This is an extremely important factor and socio-cultural attitudes to some extent account for the fact that the problem of female participation in education tends to be under acknowledged. (There are very few studies on the subject and the problem is often neither recognised nor appreciated.) Even if one accepts the hypothesis that traditionally Cameroonian women were 'parallel' or 'complementary' in their roles rather than oppressed, they were certainly in a marginal position.

Women were a scarce resource "given in marriage to the highest bidder". Their bride-price bought their labour, their sexuality and their child-bearing capacity. Marriage traditionally has been early, at puberty or just after in some tribal groups and before puberty in others. Early marriage is still common today in rural areas, and the tradition continues that marriage is the only possible future for a female: in one group for instance, all females are married - even widows immediately marrying their husband's heir. However, the girl-child is at least regarded as a valuable asset, if only for her work in the fields and for her bride-price. There is a sharp link between early marriage and the making of money. Although the father's role and influence is, in itself, declining, the continued operation of a patrilocal system and the custom of bride-price make investment in the education of girls less attractive to rural parents than that of boys. A girl is transitory within the family group.

Traditional non-formal education for girls in most tribal groups centred on preparing them to be good house-keepers and mothers. A satisfactory wife had "un ventre de fécondité", a strong spine (for working), good cooking skills and good manners. Her mother educated her towards this ideal. This traditional view conflicts with the curriculum of school and school may seen irrelevant to what is still seen as her only future role by many parents.

In most areas of Cameroon women have always worked in the fields and moved freely around the extended compounds and villages but in the Far Northern province there is a tradition of seclusion: meetings organised for women by the government are not attended and it is said that women are not allowed out even to vote. Such traditions have obvious implications for school drop-out at puberty where girls are concerned.

These differences between regions are reflected in our survey when the percentages of Primary 7 anglophone children disagreeing with the statement: "Girls need to go to school as much as boys" were 52% (northern rural), 31% (littoral rural) and 19% (central urban).

There is a broad regional disparity in custom as between the north, the south and the west. In the North men still fear the independence of women that can come through education and there is more pressure on women to conform to traditional norms. In the large urban areas of the south and west there is a growing concern over delinquency in both sexes. This affects secondary education for a significant number and there are calls for both religious and health education to be strengthened.

iii. Health

This factor was hardly mentioned by respondents, though parents highlighted it in connection with the sexual dimension of the youth culture where sex education and the health of adolescent girls are matters of concern.

The custom of bride-price obviously protects the health of young girls to some extent, but early marriage and early pregnancy militate against health as well as against educational opportunity. The female mortality rate is not however higher than that of males in Cameroon as it is in India and Vanuatu for example.

iv. Economic

Despite the relatively well developed and diversified economy, the economic factor was seen by most respondents as the most influential in respect of families facing problems of supporting their daughters in school. Cameroon has enjoyed something of a boom until recent years, but is now experiencing rapidly deteriorating economic circumstances, with the poverty factor likely to be affecting the take-up of primary schooling opportunities in the context of a significantly high birth rate.

The economy of polygamy is a significant factor in rural areas: "le travail familial a besoin de bras". More hands means more agricultural production and therefore more income: more income means a man can purchase more wives; this in turn increases production and income. More wives also means more daughters and therefore more bride-prices. The large polygamous families of the past are decreasing in number however.

Women play a central role in subsistence agriculture: they are the prime source of labour. In some tribal groups they own their own fields and own store-houses for grain. Their role in feeding or helping to feed the family has implications for their daughters who have to work with them both to help and also to learn the agricultural skills they will need later: school enrolment and attendance will obviously be affected. Girls may also be involved in their mothers' petty-trading activities with similar results.

It should be noted that modernisation in agriculture has been largely directed at cash crops (which are usually the men's concern) and not at subsistence agriculture which is where women are involved. Their tasks and those of their daughters have not become any easier or any less time-consuming.

There is thus a rather utilitarian view of girls within the traditional economy: that they are useful for house-work and farming and will ultimately bring in a bride-price. This view is prevalent among both Muslims and Christians in the north and among the Bamilékés, for example. The girl then, unlike the boy who is often allowed to concentrate on his school-work, may be expected to divide her time between domestic duties and school. Our survey showed both boys and girls help extensively at home, girls more than boys in the preparation of food and the care of siblings.

In view of their work in farming and petty trading with their mothers, girls apparently may have a relaxed attitude to schooling. Many in rural areas see themselves as economic burdens on their families and are keen to enter productive work in the context of trade and then to marry. Ordinary girls need money for marriage, and a tension arises in the early secondary years between making money and continuing with schooling. Despite increased opportunities for women to obtain paid jobs during the boom period, most are in the lower paid sector. In the professional classes women have made considerable progress but this is partly due to the size of the bureaucracy and they are mainly appointed at the lower levels. As elsewhere there appears to be discrimination against women at the senior levels, though some women are in high positions as the tribal affiliation factor is also at work.

Promotions for women are mainly in "safe" areas such as education, rather than in parastatals or international organisations. We were constantly assured however, that the political will was there and our attention was drawn to the fourteen weeks' maternity leave and one hour's feeding time per day which are mandatory in Government occupations.

v. Religious

This is not a direct factor, but indirectly influential and generally supportive of the education of girls in both Christian and Islamic zones. Though historically interested in males, neither group has excluded girls. Some of the discrimination against girls in education in Muslim areas is however religiously legitimised by traditional men. The Catholic and Protestant traditions view schoolgirl pregnancies very differently, the former being much more supportive and realistic. It would appear that Cameroon society has expectations of the churches in respect of combating the significant moral decline of adolescents and young adults in which females tend to suffer and be inconvenienced to a greater degree than males.

Some of the indigenous religious rites do give some indication of the traditional importance of boys as opposed to girls: for example, unless a man has a son, his skull will not be exhumed and he will never become an ancestor.

vi. Legal

Although customary law gives almost all powers to the male, on paper there have been equal opportunities since Independence, but the various factors mentioned above have engendered different types of female disadvantage in respect of education.

On the issue of early marriage, which is still a significant constraint on girls' education, while the minimum age for the girl is 18, lawyers will agree to legalise the union at much younger ages (as low as 12) provided that both sets of parents are agreed. This is not uncommon, especially in rural areas, and is clearly a significant factor.

vii. Political/Administrative

The broad anglophone/francophone divide has been noted. As a result there are two schooling systems which feed into a single tertiary sector. Though the system is officially complete, there are certainly locational disparities that make for difficulties of access in some places. With the rapid increase in live births a thorough review of the accessibility and capacity of the primary sector would be helpful and illuminating. The anglophone west has been relatively neglected, but there has also been a policy of locating new schools in the Nigerian border region to stem the outflow of talent.

A Ministry of Women's Affairs has been created, and this is seen as a boost to female role perception and morale even though the budget is limited. Levels of local administration need a boost, in education as elsewhere. They are male dominated, and given the increasing number of qualified females, it would probably be beneficial to the administration of education and the confrontation of female disadvantage where it does exist to have more women in this field. The view that too much educational aid from overseas has gone into higher education was strongly voiced, with a call to concentrate more on the renewal of the primary and secondary sector and increasing their capacity to cope with the rapidly increasing numbers of clients. If, with economic decline, these sectors come under stress, especially in the rural regions, it will be the females who will lose out. The age of drop-out may fall. Aid agencies like ODA should place firm conditions on the targeting of the younger students. One exception to this might be an attempt to revive the Buea Campus of the University which has apparently been systematically neglected by the central administration.

viii. Educational

Many of the schools, particularly at the secondary level are fee-paying and this affects girls more than boys. There are still significant differences between the enrolment figures for boys and girls at all levels, particularly in rural areas and even more so in the northern regions. Even in primary schools, where girls' enrolment figures are the least different, female drop-out starts quite early and is very heavy at the end of the primary cycle. The lower socio-economic groups suffer particularly because these children tend to enrol later and to drop out earlier than others. The long school day, extending until 5.30 in francophone schools is another factor which militates against girls who are required to help at home and in the fields. There is very little daylight left after 5.30 and the long break in the middle of the day may be all taken in getting home to eat and back to school again.

Class-size which is the largest we saw in the survey, 70-90 pupils being quite common, is another worrying factor from the point of view of girls in particular. From what recent research has shown us about classroom interaction and gender, one can hypothesise that the larger the class, the less attention girls are going to receive.

The primary and secondary sectors are near universal, with the main problem being at secondary level in rural areas where insufficient boarding places are available. This affects girls more adversely than boys as hostel accommodation is crucial for them.

There is evidence of residual gender bias in the secondary curriculum with traditional options being on offer. This is a problem of structure as well as content.

The technical/vocational sector is very weak, traditional academic models remaining dominant.

The tertiary sector presents a problem for anglophones and for females in particular in that places are concentrated largely in Yaoundé, the Buea campus having been neglected. Though both languages are supposed to be available, in practice French predominates. There is a tendency it was said, for francophone males to offer assistance and accommodation, with pregnancy and drop-out from the university resulting for the girl. Another response to this francophone domination is to go to anglophone West African universities, which creates an anglophone brain drain. However, among those who come through to graduation an increasing proportion are female (perhaps mainly francophone), and operating across a wide range of subject areas including the so-called male fields such as engineering.

In the teaching profession, women tend to be concentrated on the younger pupils and in the urban areas. One reason for the over concentration of teachers in Yaoundé is that married women whose husbands are in government service are guaranteed jobs in the schools and colleges of the capital. As the schools are overstaffed, some teach only a few hours per week for a full salary. This rare case of female advantage in education derives from French colonial policy.

ix. Initiatives

A number of initiatives with some bearing on gender and education were identified, namely:

- various church schemes for young mothers to improve health/hygiene and family care generally;
- OIC (Buea) - an initiative funded from the parent organisation in the USA (Opportunities Industrialisation Centre), which is a vocational/technical enterprise for young persons of both sexes. There is no gender bias in respect of trades/skills learnt and the scheme appears to be highly successful in providing 'second chances' for young people.
- Institut Pédagogique Appliqué à Vocation Rurale - a ministry backed scheme with recognised examinations and certification.
- Centre National d'Education - designed to achieve harmony between the anglophone and francophone sectors of the system.
- Local Domestic Science/Handicraft Centres for Dropout Girls.
- Rural Community Development Centres mainly for the benefit of wives and mothers.
- Maisons de la Femme - under the auspices of the Ministry of Women's Affairs.
- A general willingness by the Ministry of Education to bend rules in favour of girls by waiving for example, the normal age of admission for entry to certain classes.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our major recommendations (not necessarily in order of priority) would be:

i. Girls' enrolment in rural areas might be improved by a re-timing of the school day in francophone schools;

ii. that encouragement should be given to efficient NGOs to promote schemes to effect the progression of girls from primary to secondary schools.

iii. that support be considered for projects aiming to eradicate gender bias from primary and secondary text books and other material.

iv. that in situations of poverty and malnutrition, feeding schemes for primary and secondary pupils be considered for support;

v. there is a need for more secondary schools in certain rural locations with suitable accommodation for girls, and also for additional accommodation in some existing schools.

vi. other incentives such as a scholarship scheme for girls (cp. Asia Foundation Scheme in Bangladesh) would encourage secondary participation, increase primary enrolment in anticipation, delay the age of marriage and open better employment opportunities to girls;

vii. that the support recommended in (vi) above be targeted at rural areas in particular;

viii. that consideration be given to developing single sex secondary schools for girls in the northern zone;

ix. since the technical/vocational sector is particularly weak, and since in view of the shift in Cameroon's economic fortunes, training in this area may well become crucial to employment, support could well be offered in this case;

x. the OIC initiative in Buea could be examined with a view to using this model (or a modification) elsewhere in Cameroon;

xi. that family planning schemes be encouraged and aided to take special account of the educational needs of teenage mothers who wish to return to school;

xii. it would seem that some sort of health/sex education initiative for adolescent Cameroonians (to curb the rising rate of promiscuity as seen by parents) would assist the continuing education of girls;

xiii. there is untapped potential at the Buea campus in both physical and human terms and a good opportunity to attract anglophones who may well otherwise go to Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, or out of Africa altogether;

xiv. as in Bangladesh, there is a need to improve the level of educational policy implementation at the local level in Cameroon. Again this would involve the training of considerable numbers of personnel in systems of implementation and delivery. Their role in the implementation of policy would be a practical one of animation, advice and support rather than mere administration. The opportunity could be taken to train a significant number of women in this work;

xv. that support be considered for rationalising the provision of schooling in Yaoundé where rapid urbanisation may be creating increased complexity in patterns of demand;

xvi. that support to NGOs working with the education of rural women be considered;

xvii. that wherever possible, and especially in rural locations, an integrated approach in the fields of medical, educational and economic development be adopted;

xviii. that, again especially in rural communities, projects should be developed combining pre school initiatives with income generation and basic literacy and numeracy skills for rural women;

xix. that credible women's movements, with track records of support for women and girls in need, be identified and considered for aid;

xx. girls would also be helped by schemes in agricultural training which aimed at the modernisation of subsistence agriculture;

xxi. that efforts be made to raise the level of male awareness of the community and family economic benefits likely to arise from increased participation of women and girls in educational and income generation activity.

5.3 THE CASE OF INDIA

A. CONTEXT

a. General

Coming into being in its present form in 1947, India, to an even greater extent than most other countries, defies useful generalisation contextual and otherwise. This federal republic, comprising 22 major political units is the second most populous country in the world.

Within the sub-continent of which India stills forms the major part there is immense environmental contrast. Particularly in the drier areas, but also elsewhere, the main climatic characteristic is its unpredictability, causing continual problems of sheer survival for the majority of the population formed of rural subsistence communities. Alongside this massive and depressed rural sector is a substantial and dichotomous urban component in which are juxtaposed some of the most modern industries and high density traditional trading and religious centres. There is also a huge movement of urbanisation creating not only vast shanty zones but also multicultural complexes. Given the large territorial area, the overall population density of about 200 per square kilometre is fairly high, and in many areas rates of population increase are a cause for concern. With a per capita GNP of about $200 p.a. India is, on average, one of the poorest countries in the world.

In addition to discussions in Delhi, the field visits were limited to the States of Gujarat and Orissa and locations in and around Baroda and Bhubaneswar in particular.

The State of Gujarat on the western side of India is predominantly agricultural, though with a very significant history of trading, and associated urban centres. With a population of between 30-40 million, the State is demographically larger than most countries. Gujarati is the main language, with Hindi also official, but in the major centres such as Baroda English is widely used in the professional, industrial and commercial communities. Baroda, on the main route between Delhi and Bombay, is the centre of a former 'princely state', in which formal education has a strong tradition. However, urban/rural dichotomy is stark, with modern microelectronic industries on the one hand and the most basic subsistence agriculture on the other, on which the majority depend for survival.

By contrast, the State Of Orissa on the eastern side of the country is relatively moist, though considerably poorer than Gujarat in overall terms. Also with a population of over 30 million, Orissa is predominantly agricultural. On the interior hills are some of main concentrations of tribal peoples, some of whom are shifting cultivators. They have been pushed further inland by the extension of the more developed rural economies of the plains people and the industrial and commercial activities in the maritime zone. The predominant and official language is Oriya, with English recognised above Hindi as the second State language, which is against federal policy and has educational implications.

Although there are significant mineral deposits in Orissa, and some related secondary industries, the trading sector is not so well developed as Gujarat and the overall economic profile of the state poorer as a result. Bhubaneswar is a relatively modern and planned capital.

b. Education

The system of education in India is illustrated in the diagram below (Cowen and McLean 1984 p 154). The pupils surveyed were in the first year of the Upper Primary cycle.

The following statistics for five states/union territories attempt to demonstrate female participation in education in Gujarat and Orissa in relation to that in other parts of India. Delhi has been selected because of the idiosyncrasy of capital cities, Kerala because of its high participation rate and Rajasthan because female enrolment is lower there than anywhere else in India. The various tables illustrate girls' enrolment, overall drop-out and numbers of female teachers in each region. (Source: NCERT, Fifth All-India Educational Survey selected statistics Delhi 1989).

EDUCATION SYSTEM OF INDIA BASED ON THE 10+2+3 SYSTEM

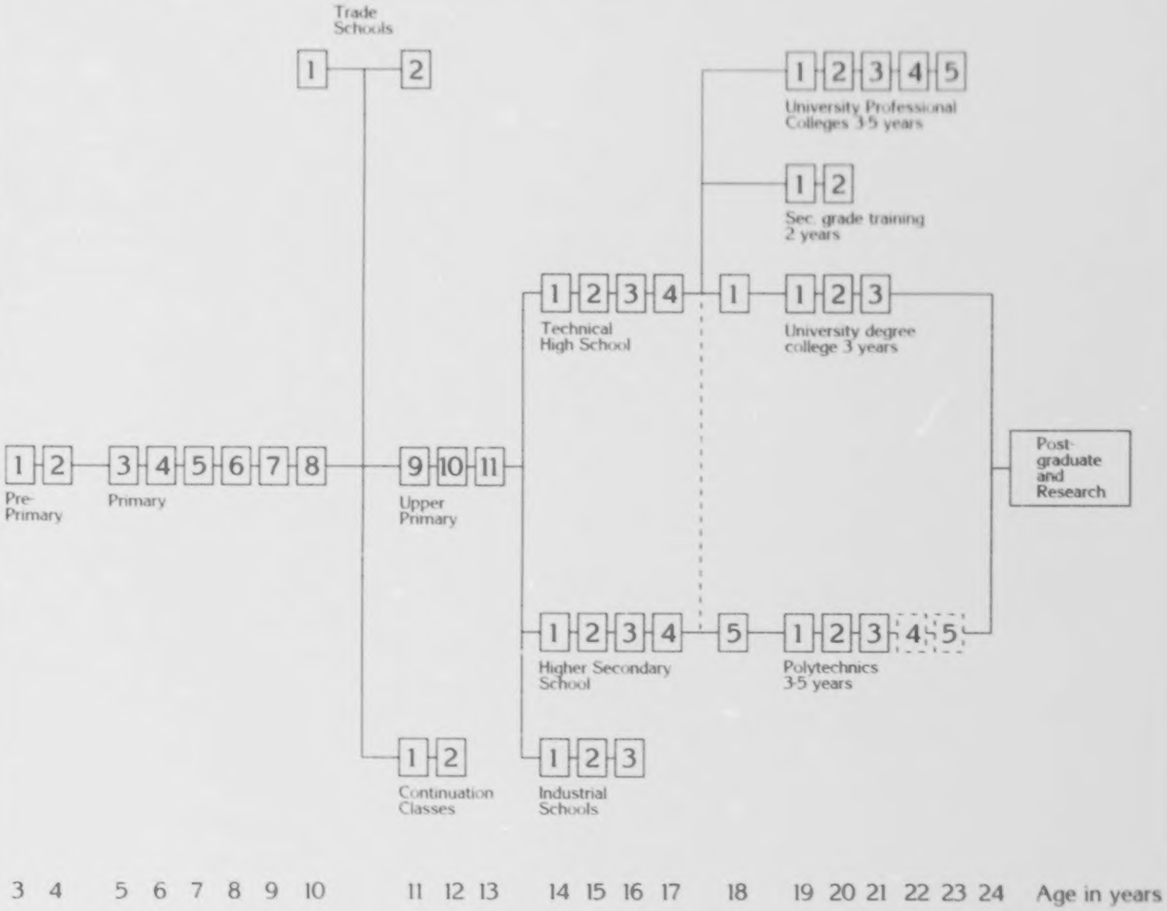

Table 1 Percentage of Girls' enrolment to Total Enrolment: 1986

	Classes I – V	Classes VI – VIII	Classes IX – X	Classes XI – XII
Gujarat	43.18	38.82	36.23	37.52
Kerala	48.79	49.12	49.63	43.00
Orissa	42.10	36.32	32.41	35.51
Rajasthan	28.02	19.75	16.82	16.42
Delhi	45.56	45.32	43.07	44.76

Table 2 Enrolment in Classes II – VIII as Percentage of Enrolment in Class 1 (Boys and Girls)

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8
Gujarat	100	73.04	69.48	57.35	50.61	41.29	34.82	30.03
Kerala	100	106.10	103.16	97.45	98.84	92.18	84.73	81.31
Orissa	100	80.15	74.60	56.48	47.10	35.15	31.01	27.92
Rajasthan	100	47.61	35.38	33.25	27.55	27.19	20.87	18.50
Delhi	100	92.58	83.10	77.51	70.51	79.56	72.00	64.37

Table 3 Percentage of Women Teachers

	Primary Stage	Upper Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary
Gujarat	44.81	41.17	21.25	22.67
Kerala	61.20	57.34	60.51	45.69
Orissa	16.08	13.14	16.13	45.94
Rajasthan	23.07	22.99	19.37	18.98
Delhi	66.11	54.88	49.34	48.41

c. Primary Perceptions

Part of the survey was conducted in Primary 7 classes in Gujarati-medium schools in and around Baroda and the rest in Oriya-medium schools in and around Bhubaneswar in Orissa. There were 266 pupils involved, 166 boys and 100 girls, from a variety of backgrounds: urban and rural elite, urban and rural poor - children of industrial chemists and of road-sweepers, of grain merchants and of subsistence farmers. Ages ranged from 10-15 years but the majority were 12 or 13 years of age. Statistics show educational opportunities and enrolment to be a little better for girls in Gujarat than in Orissa and this was confirmed by our survey in the schools. Educational provision for girls is free in Gujarat from primary school to University and has been positively encouraged in Baroda for two generations.

The pupils in the survey were quite heavily involved in helping at home: the boys mainly fetching water, working in the fields and going to the market and the girls fetching water, preparing food and sweeping. Both looked after siblings. Rural girls were more likely to help with crops in Orissa than in Gujarat. They were less likely however to go to the market and this, together with the difficulty of getting access to talk to mothers in Orissa, seems symptomatic of the prevalence of more traditional attitudes. There was general agreement that girls help at home more than boys but urban boys seemed less willing to admit this.

Overall 53 per cent of the pupils surveyed said that they sometimes could not come to school because they had to do jobs for their parents, but the percentage was higher in the rural areas in both Gujarat and Orissa. The only statistically significant difference between boys and girls was in urban Gujarat where boys were more likely to miss school for this reason. The highest percentage was in a small market town in Gujarat where many of the boys helped in their fathers' shops.

When asked to agree or disagree with the statement "Girls need to go to school as much as boys", pupils in Gujarat agreed more strongly than any other group in the survey; in fact only 3 per cent disagreed. The numbers disagreeing in Orissa, especially rural Orissa, were higher. Urban girls in both regions were more likely than rural ones to reject the idea that girls leave school earlier than boys. Pupils in urban areas were also, as in Jamaica and Sierra Leone, more likely to regard distance to school as a problem. Transport and distance loom large as problems for city children while rural ones either have a school in their village, or seem to accept quite long walking distances to get to school as being a natural part of life.

The children's perceptions of their parents' literacy levels followed the expected patterns: the percentage of mothers "good at reading and writing" is consistently lower than that of fathers and the percentage for both parents is lower in the rural areas than in the towns.

As regards marriage, the numbers of children intending to marry is slightly below the survey average in Gujarat but average in Orissa. The striking result is in the numbers of children these pupils plan to have: with only one exception, pupils from both regions and from all types of locations are almost 100 per cent in favour of having between 0 and 2 daughters and 0-2 sons. Together with Bangladesh, the Indian sample has the lowest family size projections in the survey: pupils in Cameroon, Jamaica and Vanuata envisage much larger families. The one exception in the Indian sample is in rural Orissa where traditional attitudes surface in the case of boy children: 87 per cent want 0-2 boys and 13 per cent would like 3-5 boys.

In general, career choices appear to be sex-stereotyped, and in the case of girls, rather limited. Gujarat produced the only pupils in the whole survey apart from two in Yaoundé who wanted to become artists or poets; they were all boys. Even so, female participation in education in Gujarat is obviously making progress. Of the 66 teachers in schools visited, only seven were men, even if the headteachers and bursars were male. One group of girls in a quiet, small market town can serve to illustrate how new attitudes are emerging: these girls had a wider range of career choices than the boys in the same class, more than half did not intend to marry or have children, a startling one third of them came to school on bicycles, and all came from families with no more than two or three children. They were nearly all daughters of oil, grain or cloth traders, clerks or teachers. It is not only the professionally and socially elite groups in the cities who are giving more opportunities to their daughters: a great deal is happening in Gujarat's small towns and villages too.

The answers below are those of a 12 year old girl living in a village. Her father is a clerk and her mother a stone-worker. She has two brothers. She helps at home everyday fetching water, preparing food, sweeping and shopping. She wants to be a teacher, to marry and to have one son and one daughter. (For the English version of the questionnaire see page 14).

૮. (✓) સંમત (હા)

(✗) અસંમત (ના)

(૧)	છોકરીઓ છોકરાઓ કરતાં ઘેર વધારે મદદ કરે છે.	(✓)	( )
(૨)	છોકરાઓ છોકરીઓ કરતાં વધુ વર્ષો શાળામાં રહે છે.	(✓)	( )
(૩)	છોકરીઓને છોકરાઓ જેટલીજ શાળાએ જવાની જરુરીયાત છે.	(✓)	( )
(૪)	જ્યારે અભ્યાસ છોડે છે ત્યારે સામાન્ય રીતે છોકરીઓ છોકરાઓ કરતાં નાની હોય છે.	(✓)	( )
(૫)	મારી માતા હું વધારે સમય શાળાએ જાઉં તેમ ઇચ્છે છે.	(✓)	( )
(૬)	છોકરીઓએ ખરેખર શાળાએ જવાની જરુર નથી.	( )	(✓)
(૭)	ક્યારેક મારી માતાનું કે પિતાનું મારે કામ કરવાનું હોવાથી હું શાળાએ આવી શકતો /શકતી નથી.	(✓)	( )
(૮)	શાળાએ જવાનો ખૂબ ખર્ચ થાય છે.		✓
(૯)	મને લાગે છે કે શાળા ખૂબ નજીક હોય તો સારું.	( )	(✓)
(૧૦)	મારા પિતા હું વધારે સમય શાળાએ રહું તેમ ઇચ્છે છે.	(✓)	( )
(૧૧)	હું માનું છું કે મારી માતા લખવા વાંચવામાં હોંશિયાર છે.	( )	(✓)
(૧૨)	હું માનુ છું કે મારા પિતા લખવા વાંચવામાં હોંશિયાર છે.	(✓)	( )
(૧૩)	મને લાગે છે કે આ વર્ષના અંતે હું શાળા છોડી દઇશ.	( )	(✓)
(૧૪)	મને આવતે વર્ષે શાળાએ જવાનું ગમશે.	(✓)	( )
(૧૫)	દરરોજ શાળાએ આવવાનું મુશ્કેલ છે.	( )	(✓)
(૧૬)	મને માધ્યમિક શાળામાં જવાનું ગમે છે.	(✓)	( )
(૧૭)	મને શાળા ગમે છે.	(✓)	( )

B. FACTORS

i. Geographical

There is immense geographical diversity, in both human and physical terms, even just within Gujarat and Orissa and the areas visited in and around Baroda and Bhubaneswar.

The rural/urban dichotomy is profound, ranging from sophisticated cities with high tech industries and substantial educational traditions to highly marginalised hill tribes with pre-industrial economies. There is a massive migration from rural to urban areas, creating increasingly complicated cultural mosaics with which schools are required to cope. The educational dimension of this relationship works in both directions (push/pull) and rapid change in rural areas arising from new lines of communication (roads for long distance commercial travel) can be both liberating and damaging in respect of the needs and causes of rural women and girls.

Issues of isolation, dispersal of population and locale specific cultural traits including innumerable vernaculars provide difficult contexts in which to try to focus on the particular educational needs of any given group of people. Relationship between the social groups, perhaps through education will produce new problems.

In general in the rural areas contacted the enrolment of girls was substantially less than that of boys, with an internal contrast between the relatively strong support of the local elite for their girls' schooling and the weak response of the underprivileged masses, whose daughters may not enrol until 8-10 years old and drop out within a year or two.

In any case the school systems are not universal, being provided by a variety of sponsors, including the Federal and State Governments, and a significant private sector. If the system is to become universal and effective, then more efficient location and operation of the individual units is essential, and the population base for the establishment of a primary school may need to be reduced (eg from 300 to 200). At present, distance between home and school can still be a deterrent to female participation, despite the national policy of attempts to provide schooling facilities within a radius of one kilometre of the country's rural habitations.

ii. Socio-Cultural

This is a very strong factor in the case of India, but in close harness with the economic. The marked urban/rural dichotomy already mentioned means that for more detailed discussion the populations would have to be disaggregated at least into: urban elites, urban mass, rural elites and rural mass. But then we would have further to recognise scheduled castes and tribes as well as the squatting urban poor of the shanties. Comments here must inevitably be rather general.

In most communities patriarchal forces still dominate. Females are subordinated unless they are in a matriarchal system (as in Kerala for example). Where formal schooling exists, female participation is repelled by a lack of female teachers. The issue of the security of daughters is very significant. With girls being home-based, some informants thought that the most useful educational skill they can acquire is letter reading and writing on behalf of their illiterate parents, and particularly their mothers. Subjection is the norm for most Indian women outside of the urban middle classes. This severely constrains the school attendance of girls after the onset of puberty. They are required to learn other skills of significance to their family and community and in respect of their marriageability, such as singing, dancing, cooking and the decoration of buildings. Formal education can be a severe disadvantage in this respect. For women and girls to break away from such restrictions, either the support of males would have to be gained and/or the women would have to acquire at least a measure of real economic independence. Neither is easily obtained in a situation of patriarchal poverty.

The average family size in the samples of pupils tapped in Gujarat and Orissa is smaller than Cameroon, Sierra Leone and Vanuatu, and the number of children these boys and girls hoped to have when they become parents was also relatively small, though the preference, especially of the boys was for male offspring. The high status attached to boys has the corollary of low status for girls, though in the scheduled tribes (eg Orissa), girls are considered more of an asset. Across the whole range of social groups mentioned above, the nature of female role models, and the contribution of trained and educated women to community interests are significant.

iii. Health

A factor surprisingly rarely mentioned by respondents, but self-evidently significant to the participation of girls and women in any form of educational exercise. Grinding poverty and sheer hard work are debilitating and can cause particular conditions of note, such as blindness. The high rate of female mortality has various causes but within it, infant and maternal mortality are both seriously high. Female infanticide persists, with increasingly sophisticated methods being used by the more affluent urban middle classes. There is a low valuation of female life at birth followed by neglect, early marriage and childbirth (with associated health risks), a long reproductive span and domestic overwork. Large families are seen as an insurance in rural regions, but fewer, better fed babies would be preferable. The opening up of new roads tends to bring additional health hazards, including sexually transmitted diseases. As one source put it: "Women's lives are cheaper and more expendable than men's. Their inferior status stands in the way of their survival."

iv. Economic

Poverty and hunger are the main reasons for the non-participation of girls in education. Food and survival are urgent daily issues. Boys do not attend either, usually working in the fields or going to market, but the girls' tasks often carry with them surrogate mother dimensions with all the responsibilities implied, because changing patterns of employment are forcing their mothers further afield. Pupils surveyed in the primary schools visited certainly had such tasks, especially the girls, but the ones who were probably doing most for their parents were not at school to answer our questions! Child labour is an endemic and basic aspect of the majority of poor rural economies in India.

There is a worsening position for the female work force; in both agriculture and industry women are being deprived of traditional work and income by technological development and mechanisation. Women lack the basic education to learn technical and vocational skills, which are in any case not widely available through the formal system. There is a strong belief in boys' formal education as an investment and lack of belief in non-formal education as an investment. Both are profoundly mistaken in the context of rural India.

Dowry costs can be crippling at family level. Due to the patrilocal system, the labour of daughters is lost on marriage, hence the dis-incentive to invest in their education (markedly different in matriarchal areas of course). Where formal schooling does exist, the lack of correspondence between education and economy highlights the need for income generation for rural women. The only relevant form of education at this stage is whatever will achieve this. A sharp boost in functional literacy combined with appropriate technology is needed to improve existing systems.

Women desperately need independent income (a) for the family and (b) to cope with divorce and widowhood. To achieve this, upgraded or new skills acquired must be locale specific. Such skills are particularly important to drop-outs from the academic secondary sector. Formal education during years of physical growth can render both sexes physically unable to contribute to local economy in the traditional way (for example the inability to carry heavy loads - especially water - on the head, often a female task). The later the drop-out, the greater the problem.

v. Religious

This is not a strong factor in itself and respondents rarely mentioned it. Both indigenous and imported varieties are evident. In respect of the former, both Gujarat and Orissa are Hindu areas where women traditionally have low status and are under obligation to marry and produce male children. The religious significance of sons in terms of obligations to parents can be important, though in practice some elderly people are now also seeing their daughters in this role - mainly a middle class variant due to the mobility of professional sons.

Islam is often maligned in respect of this topic, but in fact its teachings are sometimes misinterpreted in order to try to legitimise religiously the relative male:female status. The Koran does not forbid the education of girls.

Christianity has largely been a beneficial influence in India in terms of improving female status and access to education. The cases of Kerala and Assam illustrate this, where the political factor is also supportive. Teachers are attracted to denominational schools because they receive regular and reliable pay.

The role of local elders, which can have religious dimensions, in supporting increased female participation, can be vital to any development scheme.

vi. Legal

India has a good and relatively long standing record of labour laws against misuse, but these are constantly flouted by employers. Rural workers rarely complain as a paid job of any sort is a valuable asset. In any case, such laws do not relate to the informal/family based economic unit and women are constrained by other laws. They have no rights to inherit property, indeed they are property, as shown in the marriage customs. Rural and poor urban women are not in a position to claim legal rights due to lack of education (basic literacy), lack of legal knowledge and their traditional dependence on males.

Important in this respect would be the acquisition of letter writing, simple accounting and contractual skills by (rural) women, as also in such aspects as hire purchase and marriage laws. Literacy programmes therefore need to be relevant to such special needs of women and girls.

vii. Political/Administrative

The political dimension is complex here. Modern India comprises 32 major units, unified only against outsiders. All three levels of public political life, Federal, State and local, affect this issue and there are also other interested political forces (such as teachers' unions which are against locale specific operations of any kind).

Political will in respect of resolving the problem of female participation in schooling is weak, and especially so at local level, where the quality and reliability of local (male)officials is very poor and in need of reform. Rural elites are still a strong force, usually for conservatism. Decisions as to positive discrimination in favour of women can be counter-productive, but the lesser of two evils may be better than nothing.

Even where village schools exist, they tend to be appropriated for community and family functions though this may not be as dysfunctional as heads and teachers feel it is, provided additional funding accrues from such uses, which it usually does not. Formal education is clearly a subordinate element in many of the rural communities of rural India.

viii. Educational

There are many systems of provision, often overlapping or interconnecting, but in general the system is incomplete and inadequate and fails to get anywhere near the educational needs of the majority of females. This may have its benefits in the long term, providing that future developments in provision are relevant. Some sort of nursery provision is essential in order to free mothers for economically productive (income generating) work. The very low level, even incidence, of (adult) female literacy is a strong brake on development and perhaps priority should be given to initiatives combining pre-school and adult education, with provision of formal schooling coming later in association with changing economic needs in respect of education in each locality.

As far as the formal system at school level is concerned it is incomplete, poorly resourced and administered. An enormous upgrading of political will is required to direct more public funds to formal education, for devolved funds dissipate due to maladministration in the face of the complexity and scale of the problem. As it stands, formal schooling is of little relevance in the rural communities, but an essential element of urban economies, for in the case of India (to a greater extent than most of the other cases) there is also a very sophisticated urban-based economy which can absorb both male and female products of the system. As in Bangladesh middle class girls are achieving very highly and moving strongly into areas previously the preserve of males, such as engineering. But the systems of the Indian states also vary greatly in terms of female participation according to historical influences, matriarchal systems and political will. Where these come together, as in Kerala, the education participation of women and girls is outstanding. By contrast in the relatively high tribal component of the population of Orissa, the female proportion of the respective age-group participating in primary, 'middle' and secondary education is 16, 9 and 4 per cent respectively. Both State and Federal systems remain inflexible in the face of locale specific educational needs.

So in respect of girls there is low access, insufficient places and a dearth of female teachers in some rural areas. The last is particularly significant as the security of girls is vital in the face of possible assault not only en route to school, but also sometimes at the hands of male teachers. Female teachers would also be at risk in rural locations and in any case there is no accommodation for them in the villages.The majority of qualified female teachers are from urban areas and are married to husbands who work in such areas.

Girls start late and drop out quickly, even more so in the tribal communities where the whole situation of an enclosed space for (abstract) education to be imparted is profoundly alien to their own environmental imperatives and informal educational practices which serve them well unless they wish to join the modern sector, or indeed cannot avoid it reaching them. Going to formal school can disadvantage tribal children in respect of their own community.

There are efforts in the formal system to deal with gender bias in texts and this is helpful. But even in the advanced urban areas, the fact that the education of girls can lead to independence of thought and increased aspirations does not necessarily appeal to middle class males, nor to mothers-in-law who are still key figures in family organisation. Nonetheless urban middle class girls are excelling in the universities, including the male 'preserves', such as engineering, but will they help their rural sisters ?

ix. Initiatives

Numerous initiatives are being taken that relate in various ways to the issue of female participation in education and only a selection will be mentioned here, for example:

- The Integrated Child Development Scheme
  (ICDS) for the age-range 3-6, operating three hours per day under the auspices of the Ministry of Welfare;

- Operation Blackboard another Federal initiative attempting inter-alia to solve the problem of lack of female teachers (and therefore of female enrolment) in rural areas;

- The new DIETS (over 400) for the support of 'pre-service' INSET;

- The SCERT Early Childhood Centres scheme;

- The Indira Ghandi Open University outreach programme.

Massive initiatives carry immense problems of their own in such areas as funding, logistics, counterparts and constructing. Perhaps the most impressive initiatives, and more likely to succeed, are smaller scale efforts on the part of individual institutions, with the likelihood of long term commitment such as the MS University of Baroda Home Science Extension Programme

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our major recommendations (not necessarily in order of priority) would be:

i. that in situations of poverty and malnutrition, feeding schemes for primary and secondary pupils be considered for support;

ii. that schemes be funded to revise text-books and develop new ones that would help to raise consciousness at school level as to the problem of lack of female representation and the possibilities for improving the situation;

iii. that encouragement should be given to efficient NGOs to promote schemes to effect the progression of girls from primary to secondary school;

iv. that consideration be given to funding a pilot scheme of new single-sex secondary schools for girls with safe hostel facilities for both pupils and female teachers;

v. that initiatives be encouraged to develop technical and vocational education, for both sexes especially, but not exclusively, as a 'second chance' for drop-outs from formal schooling;

vi. that India be assisted in the reviewing and expansion of teacher education and training provision in such a way as to encourage greater female participation, including more residential facilities and with special consideration for the primary sector;

vii. that the particular problem of the security of (rural) females be addressed, especially the provision of accommodation for female teachers

viii. that projects be developed to improve the standard of local administration of educational provision and that the opportunity be taken to train a significant number of women in this work;

ix. that where work patterns cut across school hours, parents and the local community be involved in deciding on school hours and terms, (as per BRAC schools in Bangladesh). Adjustment should be made to the imperatives of the local economy;

x. that support be considered for rationalising the provision of schooling in large urban areas, such as Baroda and Bhubaneswar, where rapid urbanisation may be adding to already complex patterns of demand;

xi. that projects be developed and supported that address pre-school/child care needs and adult literacy needs in harness;

xii. that agencies such as ODA continue, and if possible increase, their support of development schemes targeted on rural women and operated by NGOs, and in particular to do with income generation, non-formal education and basic legal knowledge;

xiii. that incentives be increased such as: abolition of fees, provision of uniforms, free books and meals, scholarships and 'dowry-bribes' (so that schooling can be completed before marriage);

xiv. that initiatives be coordinated with health, sanitation, water, income generating and other projects so that education is part of a coordinated package;

xv. that further assistance be considered for improving the standards of traditional agricultural practice, especially where this will enhance the experience, status and income of females;

xvi. that credible women's movements, with track records of support for women and girls in need, be identified and considered for aid;

xvii. that efforts be made to raise the level of male awareness of the community and family economic benefits likely to arise from increased participation of women and girls in certain forms of educational and income generating activity.

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5.4 THE CASE OF JAMAICA

A. CONTEXT

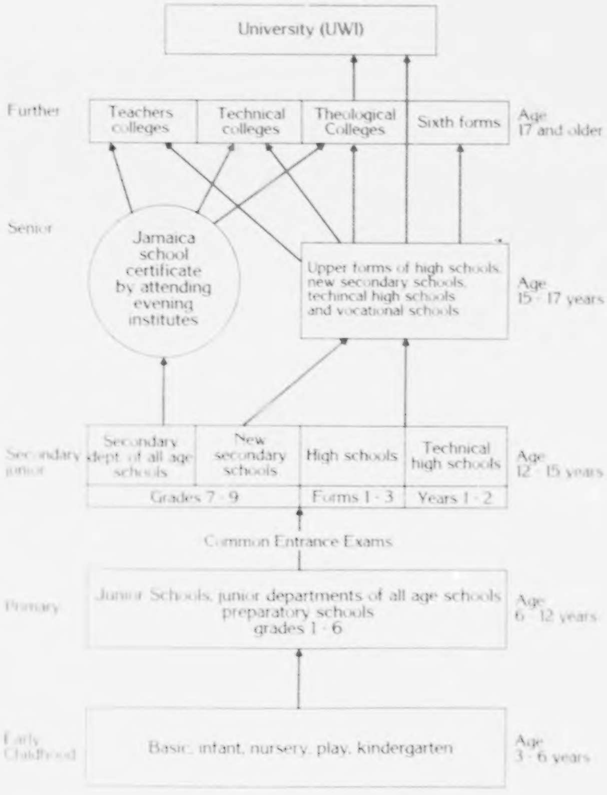
a. General

Jamaica is a republic founded in 1962 following the demise of the Federation of the West Indies through which the majority of the former British colonies in the Caribbean had gained independence in 1958. It is by far the largest in land area (some 11000 sq. kilometres), and population total (now well over 2 million) within that group of states collectively known as the 'Commonwealth Caribbean'.

Jamaica enjoys an equable sub-tropical climate though with periodic devastating visitations by hurricanes. With the higher part of the island being in the northeast and in the path of the trade winds there is a marked contrast between the leeward and windward sectors. Kingston the capital (and its environs) has grown rapidly in the past few decades on the leeward slopes below the Blue Mountains and the conurbation now contains more than half the island's population. The overall population density is about 200 per square kilometre.

In general Jamaica is culturally homogeneous, predominantly anglophone, and about 80 per cent Afro-Caribbean. However, there are significant ethnic minorities of Indian, Chinese and Levantine origin and a variety of Christian denominations (20 per cent Anglican, 20 per cent Baptist, 10 per cent Church of God, 8 per cent each of Catholic and Methodist) all of which have made significant educational contributions. The long standing North American connection has provided the link for the development of Rastafarianism from the 1920s on, and this has spread to other Commonwealth Caribbean states as well as the West Indian diaspora, with some educational effects.

By the standard indices Jamaica ranks as an 'upper-middle income country', that is to say the highest group within the developing world, with a per capita income of well over $US1000 p.a. For a relatively small island state the economy is quite well diversified, with extractive industries and export agriculture in the primary sector, a small but not insignificant manufacturing sector, and a tertiary sector that includes tourism, financial services and the main campus of the University of the West Indies which produces an advantageous multiplier effect, though of course the Government of Jamaica contributes more than any other to the capital and recurrent costs of this regional institution. For the past two decades the economy of Jamaica has been in a critical state and in recent years subject to strict IMF controls, including on public spending, and therefore education at all levels.



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b. Education

The diagram on p.58 (T N Postlethwaite, 1988, p.399) shows the educational system of Jamaica. The pupils surveyed were in Primary 6 classes, the last year of the primary cycle.

Table 1 below shows clearly the more regular attendance of girls at school in both urban and rural areas. Girls not only attend school more regularly but also achieve more steadily than boys as can be seen in Table 2 which analyses "repeaters" in the school system.

Table 1 Percentage Attendance In Primary & All Age Schools By Location And Sex

PARISH	SEX	PRIMARY			ALL AGE		
		URBAN	RURAL	TOTAL	URBAN	RURAL	TOTAL
Kingston	M	79	–	79	69	–	69
	F	83	–	83	74	–	74
St Andrew	M	79	71	75	77	61	64
	F	80	67	74	78	66	72
St Thomas	M	76	63	70	69	55	62
	F	75	70	73	70	60	65
Portland	M	71	63	67	60	54	57
	F	83	68	76	63	61	62
St Mary	M	70	56	63	67	64	66
	F	75	54	65	70	69	70
St Ann	M	73	71	72	68	62	65
	F	72	75	74	75	70	73
Trelawny	M	71	68	70	71	59	65
	F	69	74	72	76	65	71
St James	M	82	66	74	70	62	63
	F	86	69	78	78	65	72
Hanover	M	69	69	69	63	62	63
	F	75	72	74	75	68	72
Westmoreland	M	67	59	63	65	56	61
	F	73	61	67	74	62	73
St Elizabeth	M	63	64	64	62	55	59
	F	68	68	68	68	57	63
Manchester	M	76	72	74	68	62	65
	F	76	74	75	68	71	70
Clarendon	M	69	72	71	57	57	57
	F	72	73	73	64	64	64
St Catherine	M	78	63	71	64	60	62
	F	79	70	75	68	64	66
TOTAL	M	76	65	71	68	64	65
	F	78	69	74	72	64	68
GRAND TOTAL		77	67	73	70	63	67

(Source: Ministry of Education. *Education Statistics 1987-88*. Kingston. 1989, p 39)

Table 2 Number of Repeaters by Grade, Sex and Type of School

	SEX	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	TOTAL
Primary	M	1040	257	216	225	259	1089	3086
	F	653	173	148	144	180	1640	2938
All Age	M	1052	480	264	230	176	506	2708
	F	656	232	168	149	111	748	2064
TOTAL	M	2092	737	480	455	435	1595	5794
	F	1309	405	316	293	291	2388	5002
TOTAL		3401	1142	796	748	726	3983	10796

	SEX	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12	GRADE 13	TOTAL
All Age (7 - 13)	M	273	174	473	–	–	–	–	920
	F	252	218	486	–	–	–	–	956
New Secondary	M	13	41	153	34	50	–	–	291
	F	2	34	66	51	12	–	–	165
Secondary High	M	7	69	159	179	362	6	6	788
	F	25	59	89	136	279	11	3	602
Comprehensive High	M	9	14	14	13	93	–	–	143
	F	5	1	20	7	51	–	–	84
Technical High	M	–	1	11	19	31	–	–	62
	F	–	–	–	5	17	–	–	22
TOTAL	M	302	299	810	245	536	6	6	2204
	F	284	312	661	199	359	11	3	1829
GRAND TOTAL		586	910	1471	444	895	17	9	4033

(Source: Ministry of Education, ibid, p 59)

Girls are consistently entered for the selective Common Entrance Examination for secondary high school places in greater numbers than boys and win more places. The results for the years 1980-86 are shown in Table 3. Overleaf, Table 4 shows how this pattern is typical throughout Jamaica.

Table 3 Entries and Awards In The Common Entrance Examination 1980-86

Year	ENTRIES Boys	 Girls	AWARDS Boys	 Girls
1980	13796	24310	3735	5031
1981	13659	23762	3999	5317
1982	15534	26933	4199	5187
1983	17948	30065	4086	5292
1984	18083	29744	4200	5480
1985	17694	29201	4284	5784
1986	17523	28560	4303	5541

(Source: Ministry of Education)

Table 4 Common Entrance Examination for Entry To Secondary High Schools: Numbers of Entries and Awards By Type of School, By Sex and By Parish

PARISHES	ENTRIES									AWARDS									
	GRAND TOTAL			ALL-AGE & PRIMARY			INDEPENDENT			TOTAL	GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIP		FREE PLACES		CANDIDATES ENTERED FROM			
															PRIMARY & ALL-AGE SCHOOLS		INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Kingston	1764	2646	4410	1534	2451	3985	230	195	425	972	4	8	405	555	265	406	140	149
St Andrew	5262	7185	12447	4482	6248	10730	780	937	1717	3139	11	4	1419	1705	940	1134	479	571
St Thomas	537	1076	1613	530	1069	1599	7	7	14	431	1	-	167	263	164	261	3	2
Portland	407	918	1325	399	900	1299	8	18	26	231	-		107	124	103	118	4	6
St Mary	549	1110	1659	540	1094	1634	9	16	25	366	-	-	117	249	111	244	6	5
St Ann	866	1720	2586	834	1669	2503	32	51	83	697	-	-	241	456	223	430	18	26
Trelawny	449	788	1237	449	788	1237	-	-	-	-	-	-	111	186	111	186	-	-
St James	1407	2040	3447	1359	1954	3313	48	86	134	735	-	1	316	418	298	371	18	47
Hanover	225	714	939	225	714	939	-	-	-	164	-	-	71	93	71	93	-	-
Westmoreland	658	1238	1896	637	1205	1842	21	33	54	246	-	-	119	127	113	121	6	6
St Elizabeth	571	1392	1963	549	1354	1903	22	38	60	518	-	1	224	293	207	265	17	28
Manchester	819	1577	2396	739	1491	2230	80	86	166	560	1	1	249	309	194	253	55	56
Clarendon	1177	2567	3744	1064	2402	3466	113	165	278	870	-	-	388	482	318	397	70	85
St Catherine	2604	4358	6962	2533	4279	6812	71	79	150	1616	-	-	738	878	688	837	50	41
TOTAL	17295	29329	46624	15874	27618	43492	1421	1711	3132	10842	17	15	4672	6138	3806	5116	866	1022

Ministry of Education (ibid) p67

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Table 5 gives the most up-to-date figures for enrolment in government aided high-schools and shows the preponderance of girls in selective secondary education.

Table 5 Enrolment in Government-Aided High School by Sex and Parish

	1986/87			1987/88		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Jamaica	55,810	23,566	32,244	54,558	22,649	31.909
Kingston	8,281	5,263	3,018	8,218	5,260	2,958
St Andrew	19,018	6,750	12,268	19,030	6,605	12,425
St Thomas	1,276	568	708	1,303	564	739
Portland	2,380	974	1,406	2,564	1,066	1,498
St Mary	1,863	627	1,236	1,884	595	1,289
St Ann	2,593	884	1,709	2,718	954	1,764
Trelawny	1,360	434	926	1,477	414	1,063
St James	3,391	1,152	2,239	3,431	1,228	2,203
Hanover	–	–	–	–	–	–
Westmoreland	1,579	711	868	1,597	725	872
St Elizabeth	1,356	671	685	1,372	686	686
Manchester	2,467	929	1,538	2,473	905	1,568
Clarendon	3,860	1,774	2,086	4,057	1,885	2,172
St Catherine	6,386	2,829	3,557	4,434	1,762	2,672

(Source: Ministry of Education, ibid p 67)

Table 6 demonstrates the preponderance of female teachers at all levels of the school system and particularly in the primary sector.

Table 6

Number of Teachers in Infant, Primary and Secondary Schools By Qualification, Sex and Parish

PARISH	TRAINED GRADUATE		PRE-TRAINED GRADUATE		TRAINED TEACHER		PRE-TRAINED TEACHER		TOTAL		GRAND TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Kingston	46	182	49	56	370	1,060	30	36	495	1334	1829
St Andrew	95	430	44	104	548	2,074	48	58	735	2666	3401
St Thomas	9	23	8	4	121	463	11	32	149	522	671
Portland	12	14	9	6	119	483	16	23	156	526	682
St Mary	14	32	5	8	136	633	16	28	171	701	872
St Anne	9	31	3	4	153	781	4	20	169	836	1005
Trelawny	12	16	5	-	96	435	7	10	120	461	581
St James	34	69	5	11	188	800	10	15	237	895	1132
Hanover	10	17	-	1	86	385	11	14	107	417	524
Westmoreland	16	35	4	5	153	662	5	19	178	721	899
St Elizabeth	21	41	10	9	202	855	30	26	263	931	1194
Manchester	16	65	12	16	212	792	13	11	253	884	1137
Clarendon	35	64	9	8	325	1,236	29	33	398	1341	1739
St Catherine	28	132	16	34	395	1,822	26	76	465	2064	2529
TOTAL	357	1,151	179	266	3,104	12,481	256	401	3,896	14,299	18,195
GRAND TOTAL	1,508		445		15,585		657		18,195		

(Source: Ministry of Education, ibid, p15)

c. Primary Perceptions

In Jamaica the pupils surveyed were in Primary 6 classes in rural, suburban and urban schools and covered an age range of 11-13, the most compact we came across. There were 142 pupils, 60 per cent girls and 40 per cent boys. The skew was caused by including a top set from one school in which there were 41 girls and only 18 boys. The ratio of girls to boys in this particular class and elsewhere is an indicator of attendance, attitudes and achievements in Jamaican primary schools: in general, girls out-perform boys.

As regards helping at home, rural boys in the survey were slightly more likely to help in the fields than girls, but both sexes are involved in other tasks such as fetching water, caring for siblings, preparing food, sweeping and shopping. Although 87 per cent agree that girls help at home more than boys, there was a statistically significant number of boys disagreeing about this in the rural and urban groups. The percentage of pupils who said they sometimes could not come to school because they had to help at home varied according to rural/urban location and socio-economic background: rural and poorer children were more likely to miss school (46 per cent).

Almost every child in the survey declared his or her mother to be good at "reading and writing". This was the highest percentage in the six countries and reflects the high degree of female participation and achievement in education in Jamaica. Support from mothers for their children's education was 100 per cent. Only 13 per cent of the pupils (the lowest in the survey) thought that perhaps girls "didn't really need to go to school". Only 2 per cent of the children thought they might be dropping out of school at the end of the year (a greatly lower percentage than anywhere else) and practically 100 per cent wanted to continue their education.

Jamaican children however seem very aware of the direct and indirect costs of education. In fact 93 per cent agreed that "it costs a lot of money to go to school". Urban pupils were particularly conscious of this and the concern may be linked to transport costs.. Over 90 per cent of the children wished school were nearer to their homes.

As regards marriage, 89 per cent expressed an intention to marry and the vast majority wanted children. Rural pupils, particularly boys, wanted more children than those in urban and suburban schools. Boys in general wanted not only more children but more sons than did girls, to a statistically significant degree. As regards careers, both boys and girls made varied and sophisticated choices. Boys had a wider number of ideas, but girls' choices were not as stereotyped and limited as in other countries in the survey - they included 'detective', 'archaeologist', 'aircraft fire-fighter' and 'divorce lawyer', along with the more usual 'dress-maker' and 'nurse'. Very few pupils had a mother who was not working and girls took it for granted that they too would have jobs after they had completed their schooling.

B. FACTORS

i. Geographical

This factor is complex in its influence and effect due to the irregular juxtaposition of urban and rural in a small state and the relative lack of catchment regulation. Access can in practice be difficult and journeys up to 25 miles from home to school are not unknown. The pattern becomes bewildering within the Kingston/St Andrews metropolitan area. For the mass of pupils, public transport is the only regular means of reaching school. As the bus companies have been deregulated and are in cutthroat competition, they do not find "schoolers" sufficiently profitable and leave them standing at the stops. Once onto the bus young adolescent girls who should be paying reduced fare are verbally abused in view of their mature physical state and required to pay full fare or get off. The result is a daily battle with pupils arriving tired and angry. Rural pupils with longer journeys may not reach school at all.

Teachers, especially the younger ones with little capital, and also females tend to prefer moving or returning to rural areas after graduation whence they too commute into the urban centres. For historical reasons most of the well-established schools at secondary level are in Kingston or its environs and parents go for the prestigious names.

Common Entrance selection procedures from primary to high school have particular geographical dimensions since there is no official catchment, but parish boundaries and demographic patterns are taken into account. As girls form two thirds of the high school pupils they and their parents are directly enmeshed in this Byzantine situation.

Jamaicans form a 'migration society', internally, regionally and internationally, with females to the fore. Given the sociocultural nature of that society, mothers as migrant role models strongly influence their daughters. They migrate for work, and this in recent decades means the tourist areas in particular, as well as continued drift to Kingston.

ii. Socio-Cultural

This is strongly matrifocal society. Jamaican women are accustomed to gainful employment, to handling money, to taking decisions and commanding respect. Not surprisingly, daughters learn survival strategies from their mothers and boys learn to be dependent on females. This dependency is reinforced at the primary school by the predominantly female nature of the teaching force. This is resented by boys because, despite (or perhaps because of) the 'free ranging' life of the adult male they have also absorbed an ideology of male domination. This tension may be a cause of some of the male rejection of the school system, even at primary level. In any case, boys are encouraged by mothers to "do their own thing" and move easily into a streetwise culture where membership of a gang (not necessarily violent) compensates for the absence of a father figure. Such a pattern is deep rooted in Jamaican society, as is a relatively high incidence of homosexuality.

Girls, by contrast are protected by the home, with a positive role model to follow and strong support for schooling. This may not be so easy in practice in the more remote rural regions and in very poor families where, if access to school is difficult and more than adequate clothing, including shoes, is not available, then girls may be kept away from school. It would be tolerable for a boy to go ill-shod, even barefoot, but not a girl. The sartorial presentation of girls in particular is a strong cultural trait.

Boys are also deterred from school by the lack of one of their special interests, sport, which has declined markedly in recent decades. In view of their poor performance in class, boys may be over-represented in the All-Age Schools which have no suitable sporting or other amenities for them, including vocational and technical.

Teenage pregnancy is common, some estimates put the incidence at about 25 per cent of this age range, and strongest in the lower socio-economic classes. There is a feeling that one has to prove one's fertility by the mid-teens. This introduces a significant female problem in relation to education that contrasts with the general gender profile. In the past most such girls would have dropped out but several initiatives (see below) have been introduced to keep them in schooling and on line for the gainful employment that can follow the successful completion of schooling. This problem also exists in the lower middle and middle classes but mothers are usually very supportive.

Despite being accustomed to employment and responsibility, Jamaican women still tend to defer to male authority at senior institutional levels and in public life, though a break through may well come in a big way.

iii. Health

There can be significant medical effects of early child bearing, especially if combined with poverty, yet despite family size, Jamaican women have a higher life expectancy and lower mortality rate than men. Boys surveyed in primary schools looked forward to having large numbers of male children.

A rather difficult aspect to deal with is the psychological effects of failing to gain selection in the Common Entrance Examination, both for the child and the family.

iv. Economic

During the 1970s and early 1980s women and girls proceeded through the system into jobs in the growing modern sector. It is not so easy now, but if qualified beyond school level, for example as a teacher, there are still opportunities. So the predominantly female teaching force is prone to be transitory, en route to better paid and more highly regarded occupations, and the small male component even more so. This is a purely economic decision, as teaching formerly carried some prestige in Jamaica.

Traditionally both sexes helped at home, boys more on the land, and this is still so. In the urban areas, some of the boys are in the street economy, entering the informal work sector earlier. Consequently they are more often absent from school and drop out sooner. For generations boys have been into a 'money culture' and some do very well without any formal education. Others remain poor for life, mostly in the ghettoes of E and W Kingston, where the efforts to send girls to school are surviving (in the interests of the family income). In the event of poverty preventing all children in a family going to school "the one with the book" ie most likely to succeed in the academic environment (whether boy or girl) will be sent. In the primary school survey, the urban school pupils registered one of the highest levels of appreciation of the significance of both cost and the distance from home.

v. Religious

As usual not a direct factor in that all religions and denominations in Jamaica (and there is great diversity) favour the education of both sexes and indeed help to provide it. However, some strong criticism was voiced to the effect that the patriarchal ethos in some way supported male domination. The Anglican church in Jamaica had voted against the ordination of women after vigorous debate. This supports the 'deference to men in high office' syndrome. However, the United Theological College, a multi-denominational seminary linked with UWI, strongly supported the Women and Development Studies programme there.

One practical legacy is that Christian denominations founded many of the prestigious high schools and thereby determined their locations which now contribute to the somewhat bizarre pattern of provision in geographical terms.

vi. Legal

There were no comments on this factor, but it might be noted that unlike some countries, schooling is not compulsory. In the social context of Jamaica, this probably affects the boys' drop-out (or non enrolment) to some extent.

vii. Political/Administrative

Perhaps because of the devolved nature of the system, there was very little direct comment on this factor. However, there is a Women's 'Ministry' within the Government structure and major parties address the issue of women in Jamaica. Much that would normally come under this heading, of necessity falls under the following section for obvious reasons. The administrative operation of the Ministry of Education is in process of decentralising, with six local offices, in an attempt to work more closely with communities from which it hopes more direct, including financial, support for schooling may come.

viii. Educational

In the circumstances described, the Ministry of Education becomes more of a coordinator and referee, but as difficulties deepen it does intervene more. For example, it was decided to upgrade eight 'New Secondary Schools' to the status of High School, ostensibly in order to rationalise the chaotic mobility outcome of the status and significance of the Common Entrance examination. This was widely believed to have been a purely political decision.

The basic unit of educational provision is the Board of Governors of each school and these bodies tend to seek male principals of schools, despite the predominantly female nature of the teaching profession. This is said inter alia to be to do with controlling boys, but is also part of the 'deference to males in high places' syndrome.

Findings from primary school surveys on this project confirm the documented pattern of the relatively high achievements of girls, their better attendance and domination of the Common Entrance successes. By this stage the top set has become markedly skewed in sex ratio terms (for example at an urban primary school there were 41 girls and 18 boys in set A and 31 boys and 20 girls in set B).

The entire system of schooling is predicated on the Common Entrance, including the nature of the curriculum where traditional patterns and styles occur in both primary and secondary sectors. Sex stereotyping in books and other materials is common and the options structure in the secondary sector, reflects this. The common pattern of 'girls' subjects' and 'boys' subjects' is there, with the latter tending towards the sciences. In the high schools of course, the largely middle class male component performs as well as the girls, though perhaps because of the thrust from earlier years the profile of girls in the CXC examinations and in the higher education sector is strengthening year by year. Top students in the applied sciences, like engineering, are now female. Curiously, however, at school level there is still a gender difference in mathematics that tends towards the boys and is found in some other countries. In general girls do better in single sex schools.

ix. Initiatives

- Crisis Centres have been established for pregnant girls and young mothers where education can be continued while looking after the baby. These are doing a good job but cannot meet the demands produced by the high rate of teenage pregnancies.

- There are more creches appearing in work places.

- The Van Leer Foundation has a project for teenage mothers in three locations.

- An unofficial but sanctioned abortion clinic operates in Kingston, largely for the benefit of pregnant teenagers who wish to take this option. The standards are high as it is de facto part of the medical system.

- The YWCA have established an Educational Institute for girls which provides vocational/technical education for products of the 'All Age Primary Schools' who emerge without qualifications and too young for employment. It is a 'second chance' for such girls and is doing an excellent job. Funding for the teachers' salaries is from the Government but not for other salaries (ancillary) or for materials which are inevitably expensive in this type of work. For this reason perhaps an academic element leading to public examinations has been introduced. There are good relationships with both private and public sector employers who take girls on placements. The regime is strict. Failure to comply loses a girl's placement and therefore her prospect of gainful employment. The main Institute is in Kingston but two others have been founded elsewhere on a very small scale without any Government support as yet.

- The Sisteren movement, though not directly educational at school level, provides support for women and girls who are in difficulties and in particular who have been abused. The fact that they are in so much demand throughout Jamaica illustrates the continued disadvantage of females, mainly in the lower social groups, despite the formal educational profile. Sisteren will help girls of school age on an individual basis and also has a travelling theatre to present and explore the problems it is addressing and some initiatives to resolve them. It is concerned with income generating skills for women and has a retail outlet for its products. Other sources of funding are very limited.

- Women and Development Studies Programme in UWI.
  This is a cross-faculty and cross-campus initiative which has the strong 'moral' support of the male dominated hierarchy of the University but not the funding. Over a decade or more it has operated a number of successful regional meetings, workshops and programmes and by so doing has contributed significantly to the understanding of gender issues in the Caribbean region. It is now looking even wider for recognition and funding and hoping to examine Gender in a Single Europe. It is not directly concerned with the educational and other experiences of Jamaican females in particular but does provide a theoretical and academic framework for some of those who do work 'on the ground' for the improvement of the position of women and girls. Unfortunately, for reasons of internal institutional policies, the Faculty of Education is not yet linked with this initiative, though some tutors are, on a personal basis.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our major recommendations (not necessarily in order of priority) would be:

i. that support be considered for feeding schemes in the primary and secondary schools, such as already exist but need developing further; they are currently run from the Ministry of Education. If such a development is not forthcoming, in the circumstances of economic down-turn there could well be an increase in the drop-out rate of both sexes, even at primary level;

ii. that research be funded into the gender dimension of the (New) Secondary Schools and All Age Schools. To date almost all research has been on the High Schools. It would be useful, perhaps especially for boys in Jamaica, to know more about this important sector;

iii. that support be considered for projects aiming to eradicate gender bias from primary and secondary textbooks and other materials.

iv. that support be considered for the YWCA Educational Institute for Girls model, for its extension to other locations in Jamaica and for the proper resourcing of the existing programmes, which inevitably involve mechanical, electrical and other apparatus;

v. that support be considered for a boys equivalent to the YWCA model to be established;

vi. that support be considered for the development of Community skills centres and other skills training programmes to promote employment prospects for teenage girls (and boys), but taking into account lessons learnt from the generally disappointing HEART initiative;

vii. it would seem that some sort of health/sex education initiative is needed for adolescent

Jamaicans in order to combat the high rate of teenage pregnancies which may well adversely affect the educational profile of up to 25 per cent of young Jamaican females;

viii. associated with the previous recommendation, support for further development of family planning schemes should be considered, especially to take account of the educational needs of teenage mothers who wish to return to school;

ix. that support be considered for the reform of educational administration under way that will place the Ministry of Education on a decentralised operation linking with local communities. As in other countries visited, the level of local educational administration is a vital one in terms of reaching the real problems and being able to respond efficiently;

x. that support be considered for rationalising the provision of schooling in large urban areas, especially Kingston where complex patterns of demand and transportation can be disadvantageous;

xi. that support be considered for Women's Centres for pregnant teenagers;

xii. that consideration be given to aiding selected women's organisations like Sisteren which are clearly needed by many Jamaican women and girls.

5.5 THE CASE OF SIERRA LEONE

A. CONTEXT

a. General

Sierra Leone is one of the smaller West African republics, with an area of some 71,000 square kilometres. Independence was gained in 1961, and the country comprises a number of significantly contrasting environmental and cultural components.

There is a fundamental and considerable difference between the Freetown Peninsula, which includes the capital and primate city, and the rest of the country. Following the resettlement of freed Afro-Caribbean slaves from the New World on the peninsula and its environs, this part of the country not only benefited from the trading economy of the major port but also developed an educationally oriented culture served by a number of prestigious schools and colleges. This cluster of institutions once extended its influence throughout West Africa and beyond.

While the (Krio) culture of the peninsula is relatively homogeneous, urban and Christian based, the rural interior of the country has both Christian and Islamic dimensions and is multi-tribal and multi-lingual, though two major groups predominate, the Mende and the Temne, each with about 30 per cent of the total national population.

Economically, Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita income of about $US200 p.a. The majority of people are subsistence farmers, and at this basic level the land is generally supportive. There are significant mineral deposits, including diamonds, and the one major trading centre of Freetown, but the general economic profile of the country has been in decline for at least a decade. One of the results of this is the chronic underfunding of public education at all levels, but particularly in the primary sector where the high birth rate is causing increasing demand for places. At the same time there is an evident disenchantment with schooling on the part of some rural parents and communities which is shared by a significant number of primary teachers who remain unpaid for considerable periods of time and are forced to revert to their land for personal survival.

However, with a total population still only about 3 million and a modest overall density of 40 per square kilometre, survival on the land is still possible, but such a scenario does not encourage participation in school by either sex.

b. Education

The diagram below (T N Postlethwaite, 1988, p 593) shows the educational system in Sierra Leone. The survey was conducted with pupils in Primary 7.

Table 1 shows the relative enrolment of boys and girls as proportions of the school-age population at primary level. Enrolment is low for both sexes but lower for girls in all age-groups.

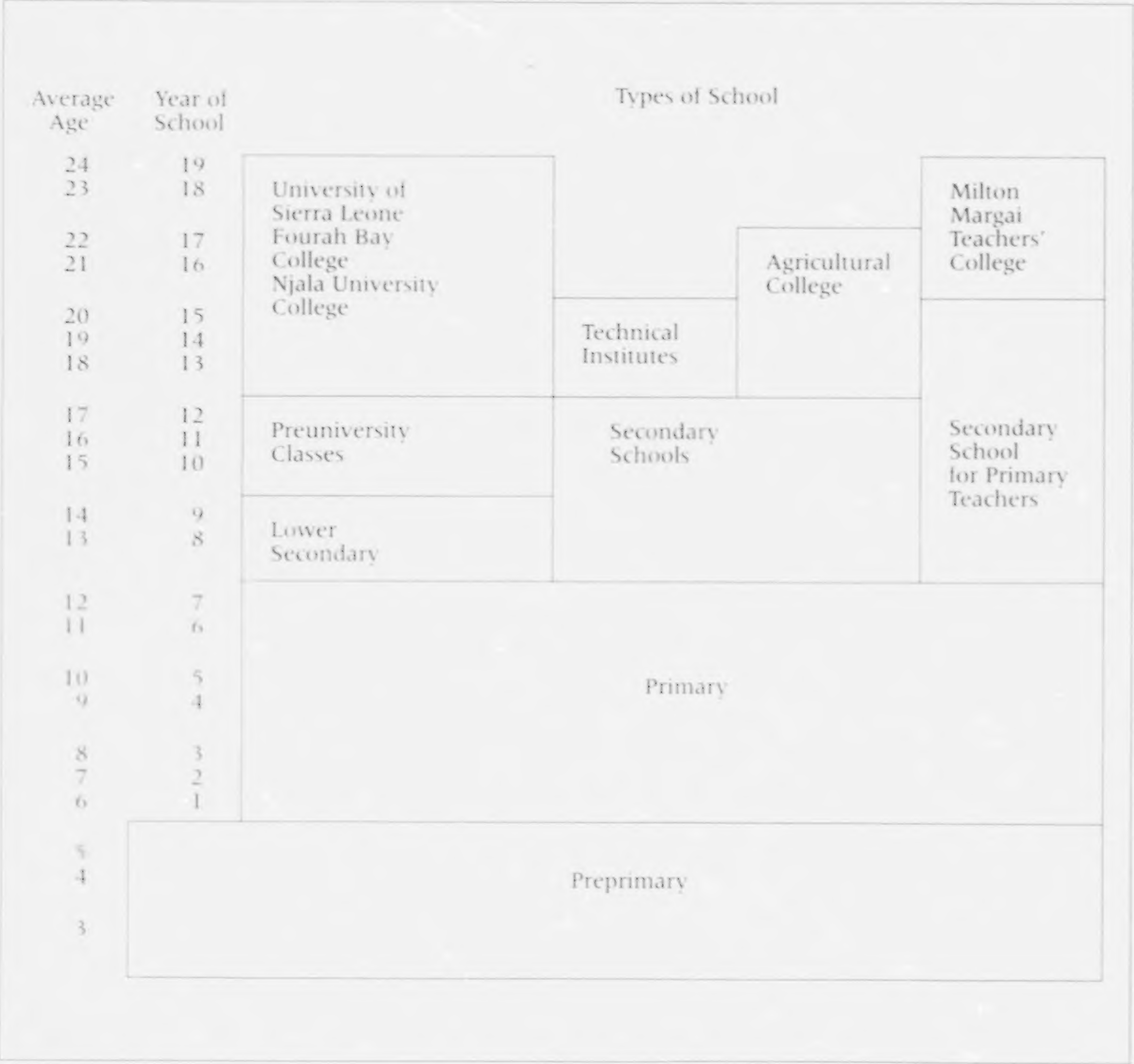


Table 1

Enrolment in Primary Schools in Relation to Number of Children of School-Going Age

Age	% Enrolment of Boys In Relation to Boys of School-going Age	% Enrolement of Girls in relation to Girls of School-going Age
5	36.7	28.0
6	47.1	33.4
7	48.1	32.2
8	42.0	28.6
9	39.4	25.7
5-9	42.6	29.6
10	35.2	24.1
11	31.7	20.8
12	27.1	16.3
13	20.6	11.1
14	12.4	4.5
10-14	25.7	15.6

(Source: J May-Parker (1986) from C Davies et al. Final report on access to school - primary and secondary data 1977 - 1978. Government of Sierra Leone. nd.)

Secondary enrolment is lower for girls than for boys but also varies according to province. Tables 2 and 3 contrast the enrolment and retention of boys and girls in the Northern Province and the Western Area (which includes Freetown), and illustrate the extremes of the regional differences.

Table 2 School Enrolment by Class and Sex: NORTHERN PROVINCE

FORMS	MALES		FEMALES		TOTAL	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	2,251	30.6	980	38.1	3,231	32.6
2	1,715	23.3	595	23.1	2,310	23.3
3	1,519	20.7	551	21.4	2,070	20.9
4	1,119	15.2	294	11.4	1,413	14.2
5	668	9.1	147	5.7	815	8.2
Lower 6	48	0.7	3	0.1	51	0.5
Upper 6	27	0.4	3	0.1	30	0.3
TOTAL	7,347	100.0	2,573	100.0	9,920	100.0

Table 3 School Enrolment by Class and Sex: WESTERN AREA

FORMS	MALES		FEMALES		TOTAL
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER
1	3,334	27.9	2,671	30.0	6,005
2	2,719	22.7	2,099	24.2	4,810
3	2,345	19.6	1,585	18.3	3,930
4	2,009	16.7	1,255	14.5	3,264
5	1,225	10.7	895	10.3	2,120
Lower 6	179	1.5	100	1.2	279
Upper 6	113	0.9	57	0.7	170
TOTAL	11,924	100.0	8,662	100.0	20,586

(Source: C Davies et al., ibid p61-62)

c. Primary Perceptions

The survey in Sierra Leone was carried out in Primary 7 classes in Freetown, in a small town in the north and in relatively remote villages in the north-east and southeast of the country. The ages of pupils ranged from 10-15 but the majority of older pupils were in schools outside Freetown. Altogether 140 girls and boys were included in the survey in roughly equal numbers.

In rural areas both boys and girls were equally and very much involved in helping with agricultural work and in such tasks as fetching water. In both rural and urban areas both sexes were concerned with caring for siblings. It was by no means a task only for girls. Cooking was also done by both sexes but to a lesser degree in the north where it is traditionally the female who prepares food. Both boys and girls were involved in sweeping and shopping. Village children agreed 100 per cent that girls help more at home than boys, but there was less consensus in the north (85 per cent) and Freetown (83 per cent). Outside Freetown a staggering 86 per cent of children agreed that they sometimes could not come to school because they had to help their mother or their father; even in Freetown however 52 per cent were in the same position. There was no significant difference between the sexes in this and 37 per cent found it difficult to get to school every day.

Pupils were largely in agreement that boys stay on longer at school than girls and even more agreed in the villages. Outside Freetown 35 per cent thought that girls did not need to go to school as much as boys. The attitudes in the north of the country were more negative even than in the villages, in fact 77 per cent of pupils there agreed that "Girls don't really need to go to school". This was by far the most negative reaction to girls' schooling in the whole survey and was not statistically significant by sex - the majority of the girls agreed with the boys! Parental attitudes to their sons' and daughters' schooling seemed highly supportive, judging by the answers to items 5 and 10 ("My mother/my father wants me to come to school very much") and there was no sign of sex discrimination in the results for this question.

The pupils' responses to the questions on their parents' skills in reading and writing indicate much lower literacy levels for mothers than for fathers in the villages, the small northern town and in Freetown itself. The rural and northern figures for women (17 per cent and 52 per cent respectively) are the lowest in the whole survey, whilst those for Freetown, though lower than those for men, are a respectable 80 per cent. The children's perceptions of their fathers' reading and writing skills follow a similar pattern at a higher level: rural 59 per cent, northern urban 85 per cent and Freetown 87 per cent. Outside Freetown the gap between male and female literacy is a serious one: the children's responses confirm the statistics.

Pupils in Sierra Leone are extremely conscious of the costs of education: 89 per cent agreed that "it costs a lot to go to school", and this was the highest figure in the survey. In Freetown pupils are very concerned about distance - 87 per cent wished school were nearer to their homes and this would appear to be related to the lack of zoning and the poor transport system in the city. However, most of the children in all regions wanted to continue school next year.

The children's families were large and comparable in size with those in Cameroon and Vanuatu: (1-3 children: 15.6 per cent; 4-6 children: 40.7 per cent; 7-9 children: 30.7 per cent and more than 10:12.8 per cent). Whatever their intentions as regards marriage and having children themselves (this group was not specifically asked about this) their career choices seem to be, as elsewhere, far more varied and ambitious in the case of the boys. In rural areas, choices seem to be dictated for both sexes by the limited number of role models available- boys think they would like to be a doctor or a missionary, girls write down "nurse". At the moment very few rural girls complete primary school and for those who do, the nearest secondary school may be a long way off. Not many will have the chance to become a nurse.

The answers below are those of Yama who is twelve and lives in a small town in the north. Her father is a teacher, her mother a housewife and she is the middle child in the family of three girls and two boys. She fetches water, sweeps and looks after her little brother and sister every day. Her teacher considers she is average in ability.

Say whether you AGREE or DISAGREE with these sentences:

✔ AGREE (Yes!)
✘ DISAGREE (No!)

1. Girls help at home more than boys [✓ ✔] ✘
2. Boys usually stay at school for more years than girls [✓ ✔] ✘
3. Girls need to go to school as much as boys ✔ [✓ ✘]
4. Girls are usually younger than boys when they stop going to school [✓ ✔] ✘
5. My mother wants me to come to school very much [✓ ✔] ✘
6. Girls don't really need to go to school [✓ ✔] ✘
7. Sometimes I can't come to school because there are jobs I must do for my mother or my father [✓ ✔] ✘
8. It costs a lot of money to go to school [✓ ✔] ✘
9. I wish school was nearer to my house [✓ ✔] ✘
10. My father wants me to come to school very much [✓ ✔] ✘
11. I think my mother is good at reading and writing ✔ [✓ ✘]
12. I think my father is good at reading and writing [✓ ✔] ✘
13. I think I shall be leaving school at the end of this year ✔ [✓ ✘]
14. I would like to go to school next year [✓ ✔] ✘
15. It is difficult to come to school every day ✔ [✓ ✘]
16. I would like to go to secondary school [✓ ✔] ✘
17. I like school [✓ ✔] ✘

WHEN I GROW UP

When I grow up, the work I'd like to do is nurse

B. FACTORS

i. Geographical

Sierra Leone shares with other West African states, and of course the Cameroons, a Christian/Islamic dichotomy. The Christian dimension is further divided between the Freetown Peninsula and the remainder. The Freetown Peninsula contains not only the primate city and capital, but also the distinctive Krio culture of the descendants of freed slaves from the Caribbean. The contrast between the capital and the rest of the country is even greater than in most developing states, and this includes education.

In the Western Province the position of women is far better than elsewhere in Sierra Leone, whereas to be both female and provincial leads to underprivilege. The further inland along the few roads of any note, the more remote and isolated each settlement becomes. Urban/rural dichotomy may be best described in terms of Freetown/Province dichotomy, so dominant is the primate city among the towns of Sierra Leone. Most educated working women are in Western Province. Northern Province is particularly low in the provision of post-primary education and in the proportion of the female population who are gainfully employed.

Rural/urban contrasts are sharp in secondary education enrolments and in literacy rates. Indeed the rural parents in our survey had the poorest literacy rate in the entire project. Distance from school can be quite considerable and deter attendance at primary level in the rural regions, but for different reasons, getting to school across Freetown can also be very difficult. Secondary pupils are likely to have even longer distances, and both public and private transport are extremely poor. Parents are particularly concerned about their daughters having to travel long and insecure journeys to school.

ii. Socio-Cultural

Factors in this range are central to the poor profile of female participation in education in Sierra Leone. The traditional role of women as housekeeper, mother and community member remains strong. Outside of Freetown, men are willing for their women to have employment initiatives but only if they are based at home. Traditional forms of tribal education continue, with the Bondo bush schools fulfilling certain traditional roles. By contrast the curriculum of the rural primary school appears, and of course is, of little relevance to the realities of everyday life in rural Sierra Leone. So while the participation rates of rural girls are very low, those of boys are not much better.

The low status of women is particularly noticeable in Northern Province, mainly for reasons of custom rather than religion, though Islam tends to be held responsible. In fact some significant educational initiatives for girls in Sierra Leone have been generated by Islamic communities and professionals.

In the provinces and rural areas there is an obligation for a 'mature' girl to marry. Early marriage and pregnancy are still major reasons for drop-out or non-enrolment. Several of the parents surveyed indicated quite independently the fact that many girls were precocious (in the sexual sense) and it is evident that the high rate of sexual relationships from an early age is a cultural element across gender.

Male domination attitudes run deep and are early acquired. For example, considerable proportions of boys in the rural primary schools visited did not consider it necessary for girls to go to school at all. The figure reached 77% in Makeni which is way ahead of anything else in the survey. On other surveys, the 'negative attitudes of fathers' figures strongly, and 'lack of encouragement from parents' is also sadly a frequent comment.

iii. Health

Surprisingly rarely mentioned in interviews, this factor is clearly an important one. Early marriage, and especially pregnancy, can have adverse effects on the physical development of girls. The massive rate of sexual activity inevitably introduces related medical problems, including now AIDS, and so the International Planned Parenthood Federation has a major project running in Sierra Leone. Part of the problem according to the project director, may be ascribed, albeit indirectly, to education in that in order to reach a secondary school some girls and boys will have to live away from home and so such sanctions as have existed are inoperative. Even routine health practices learned informally in the community are forgotten. Under-nourishment, though not famine, is widespread in Sierra Leone, and when combined with physical hardship and long journeys to school, it takes its toll. Inevitably levels of concentration are reduced.

iv. Economic

Poverty is by far the largest cause of low levels of female participation as perceived by virtually every set of respondents, teachers, students, parents and professional educators. It operates both directly and indirectly. The hidden costs would include the usefulness of the pupil at home and on the land, but the real costs are quite significant too. Primary school pupils are well aware of this and wish to try to succeed in order to make money later for themselves and their own families. Children of both sexes may be found in Freetown engaging in petty trading during school hours.

Girls may obtain money from boy friends and sometimes from "sugar daddies" - older men who will fund their education or other interests in return for a relationship. There is a danger that this may well lead to an early pregnancy. The age at which this tends to happen corresponds roughly with the onset of the academic secondary school programmes/options leading to public examinations. This is an expensive stage, requiring the recommended course texts and other costly items. It is particularly disappointing for girls who have worked hard to reach this point to have to drop out, and the support of an older man can resolve the problem.

Large family sizes are both benefit and burden, but in this context, rather the latter, being in the range of 5-10 children in the majority of cases at the schools visited. Inevitably fees cannot be raised for as many children as this, and if anyone is going to be supported, it will be a boy. Even if they do get to a school, most will also have to work hard at home or on the land. Such activities as looking after siblings, fetching water, sweeping the compound and going to market are vital to the survival of the family. So a family's opportunity costs, as well as actual costs will be considerable if one or more of their children goes to school.

Most educated women are from elite backgrounds. There are some employment opportunities for women in Freetown but hardly any in the provinces. Even in Freetown due to economic constraint, men are coming into competition with women for jobs normally occupied by females, such as typing, nursing and primary school teaching.

It is difficult to desegregate economic from socio-cultural factors. For example, the Fula, once a remote minority in the north, are now a major entrepreneurial force, using their increased wealth to educate both boys and girls. This is a modern parallel to the mercantile operations of the creoles in the nineteenth century who used their wealth to educate daughters as well as sons by establishing schools and encouraging their offspring to seek professional roles. The Fulas are now investing in real estate and property development in Freetown. Twenty-five years ago, the enrolment of Fula girls in school was rare, now it is increasingly strong.

v. Religious

The broad dichotomy between Christian and Islamic zones has been noted. Religion per se is not a direct factor according to most respondents, but it was strongly considered to be so by one particular group, the senior professionals interviewed in Sierra Leone. As elsewhere, it is custom rather than religion that tends to deprive girls of schooling in Muslim areas. In addition to the example of the Fulas mentioned above, there are other initiatives from within the Islamic communities affording opportunities to girls to acquire technical and vocational skills. The Christian denominations also have been a positive force for female education. Their institutions tend to be well organised and attract good staff who are generally committed to their task as they know they will be paid regularly.

vi. Legal

Not seen as a factor in the modern sense, though traditional custom is obviously a constraint on girls' education in many areas.

vii. Political/Administrative

Given the state of the economy, it is not possible for the political and administrative systems to serve the communities as the regulations provide. One telling example is that of the payment of teachers' salaries. It is not uncommon for these to be in arrears by several months. Consequently many teachers become demotivated or simply have to find other sources of income. In rural areas they may work on their land instead of coming to school. If rural schools are inadequately staffed as a result there is even less reason for parents to suffer loss of labour at home or on the land.

Even though the Government is faced with severe difficulties, questions were raised about the political will required to maintain the educational effort, and within that to try harder to meet the particular needs of girls. A Women's Bureau has been set up in the Ministry of Rural Development, but it has virtually no funding at all. As pointed out by a senior researcher at the University of Sierra Leone, the issues are complex and need to be addressed by cross-sectoral efforts. An example would be the Basic Education thrust where programmes for out-of-school girls, the non-formal education of adults and improved primary programmes were all components of an integrated exercise. However, in current circumstances it is difficult to envisage such a coordinated effort being effectively mounted.

Reference was made to the fact that the Sierra Leone Government did not sign the UN Convention on Women's Rights until 1988, and even then only after considerable pressure had been brought to bear. The appalling communications problem aids Government control in that there is little (and late) reporting of complaints or demonstrations. There are only very limited networks of communication, and no television, which leads to the further fragmentation of the mass of the population.

The politics of language in Sierra Leone obviously affects education as political affiliation tends to be regional. This is reflected in the selection of the four main community languages for the new curriculum, Krio, Mende, Limba and Timne.

viii. Education

Provision is theoretically equal, but in practice is not necessarily so; and girls do not take up such opportunities as there are, due to the various pressures already mentioned. The crumbling nature of the system, physically as well as administratively, clearly renders it unattractive. Many parents complained in their returns about the state of buildings. They also called for an effort in the area of technical and vocational education, since the experience gained in the present curriculum does not seem so functional in the light of occupational and income generation needs.

To summarise some of the problems particularly affecting girls:

there is low enrolment overall, not just girls but worse for them, and especially in the provinces;

the drop-out rate is high, again worse for girls and in the provinces;

the system of repeating classes means that more costs have to be borne by parents over a longer period of time; this makes girls older than they should be by the secondary stage when problems of pregnancy appear;

teachers' salaries remain unpaid for months and this creates demotivation and absenteeism;

the curriculum is not seen as relevant, while alternatives like technical and vocational approaches are unresourced.

ix. Initiatives

Among the initiatives noted were:

- The Women's Commission in Adult Education
- The Planned Parenthood Federation Programme
- The Bunumbu Curriculum Development Project - a six year basic education work-orientated curriculum which includes skills for employment.
- PLAN International - a scheme providing financial help to cover fees, books and medical expenses to successful applicants from the Greater Freetown area. Currently there are about 1400 scholars, divided equally between the sexes.
- The Women's Bureau - Ministry of Rural Development.
- Njala University College scheme on The Participation of Women in Adult Literacy
- Peoples' Educational Association undertakes literacy work, for example the development of teaching/learning materials and the training of female literacy tutors
- MECAS/UNESCO Project on Women & Civic Education

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our major recommendations (not necessarily in order of priority) would be:

i. that NGOs be encouraged to develop (non-formal) primary education projects for both sexes but with some positive discrimination in favour of the participation of girls;

ii. that in situations of poverty and malnutrition, feeding schemes for primary and secondary pupils be considered for support;

iii. incentives for enrolment and retention (waiving of fees for girls);

iv. that encouragement should be given to efficient NGOs to promote schemes to effect the progression of girls from primary to secondary school;

v. investigate textbooks and materials for gender bias and develop appropriate materials;

vi. more and better secondary provision in rural areas and small towns; if possible single sex schools with secure boarding facilities, especially in the northern region;

vii. in the urban areas, primarily Freetown, the further funding and development of scholarships schemes for secondary girls;

viii. that initiatives be encouraged to develop technical and vocational education for both sexes especially, but not exclusively, as a 'second chance' for drop-outs from formal schooling;

ix. a family planning and returnees scheme for teenage mothers;

x. it would seem that some sort of health/sex education initiative is needed for adolescent Sierra Leonians, especially in the Freetown area, in order to combat the high rate of teenage pregnancies;

xi. a scheme to train more female teachers for rural locations;

xii. there is a need to improve the level of educational policy implementation at the local level. This would involve the training of personnel in systems of implementation and delivery. Their role in the implementation of policy would be a practical one of animation, advice and support rather than mere administration. The opportunity could be taken to train a significant number of women in this work;

xiii. that assistance be provided to enable the school day and the school year to be adjusted to the realities of rural life and the demands of rural economies on child labour;

xiv. the resolution of the transport problem in Freetown by zoning or developing an infrastructure;

xv. literacy and income-generating schemes for women;

xvi. that initiatives be coordinated with health, sanitation, water, income generating and other projects so that education is part of an integrated package;

xvii. that further assistance be considered for improving the standards of traditional agricultural practice especially where this will enhance the experience, status and income of females;

xviii. that, especially in rural communities, projects should be developed combining pre-school initiatives with income generation and basic literacy and numeracy skills for rural women;

xix. that aid be considered for credible women's movements with track records of support for aspects of education and training, both formal and non-formal;

xx. that efforts be supported to raise the level of male awareness of the community and family economic benefits likely to arise from increased participation of women and girls in educational and income-generating activities.

5.6 THE CASE OF VANUATU

A. CONTEXT

a. General

Formerly an Anglo-French Condominium, known as the New Hebrides, Vanuatu gained independence in 1980. Like Cameroon, the country therefore has a dual colonial legacy, with obvious educational implications, though it is not formally divided into anglophone and francophone sectors in a geographical sense.

The indigenous population is predominantly Melanesian, but comprises a complex of numerous local languages and ethnic identities. In addition to English and French, there is also the local pidgin language Bislama, which though not spoken by all, acts as a lingua franca.

The country is also physically fragmented, being an archipelago of twelve major islands and numerous smaller ones. This inevitably affects national cohesion and the costs of educational provision. Like many small island states, while the economy of Vanuatu is inevitably limited and concentrated, the possibilities for survival, mostly on a basis of subsistence agriculture, are certainly apparent. Potential for diversification and development is another matter; these must be limited as are the employment prospects of the output of the formal education system. The per capita GNP p.a. is over $US500, which places Vanuatu in the middle range of developing countries.

With a population of only about 120,000 Vanuatu is by far the smallest, both economically and in terms of land area, among the six case study countries in this project.

b. Education

Since Independence, the Government of Vanuatu has been attempting to fuse the separate and differing anglophone and francophone systems of education into one national system with a choice of English or French as medium of instruction. Curriculum development for the six-year primary cycle is taking place for both language mediums in parallel so that ultimately there will be a single curriculum and materials will differ only in language.

Small village schools in some areas are feeder infant schools for larger upper primaries in more central or accessible places where boarding facilities are provided. In some of these boarding primary schools there are both English and French medium classes.

At the end of primary 6 there are selection examinations for entry to Junior secondary schools/first cycle of secondary education. There is at least one junior secondary school on most of the larger islands but some do not as yet go as far as Year 10. Senior secondary classes are centralised in Port Vila at Malapoa College and the Lycée Louis Antoine de Bougainville and entry is regulated by a selection examination at the end of the junior secondary cycle (Year 10). Facilities for technical education and the Teacher Training College are also based in Port Vila. There is a USP campus in Vanuatu, but most students follow pre-university and undergraduate courses abroad in New Zealand, PNG or at the main USP campus in Fiji.

The figures for girls' enrolment in primary schools vary according to region, as can be seen in Table 1. Banks and Torres in the north and TAFEA (Tanna and neighbouring islands) in the south have the lowest percentages. Percentages for Paama, Epi, Tongoa and the Shepherds are distorted by the smallness of the populations. Girls' enrolment in Efate where Port Vila is situated is consistently high throughout the primary cycle, as one would expect.

Table 1

Girls as % of Enrolment by Region and Class

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	TOTAL
1. Banks/Torres	42%	52%	41%	39%	37%	44%	42%
2. Santo/Malo	49%	43%	41%	42%	48%	40%	45%
3. Ambae/Maewo	48%	47%	50%	45%	45%	45%	47%
4. Pentecost	45%	53%	47%	45%	43%	47%	47%
5. Malekula	45%	46%	51%	46%	47%	49%	47%
6. Ambrym	49%	44%	49%	41%	45%	47%	46%
*7. Paama	53%	42%	58%	42%	51%	44%	47%
*8. Epi	41%	48%	54%	43%	46%	48%	47%
*9. Tongoa/Shepherds	47%	51%	46%	52%	56%	46%	49%
10. Efate	49%	48%	49%	47%	48%	47%	48%
11. TAFEA	46%	44%	46%	43%	43%	41%	44%
TOTALS	47%	47%	48%	44%	46%	45%	46%

(Based on 1989 figures supplied by the Ministry of Education).

School enrolment rates as percentages of the whole population and at the different levels vary greatly when considered in terms of urban/rural areas and by sex. Table 2 (Asia Development Bank, 1987) indicates clearly the disadvantage of rural girls.

Table 2

School Enrolment Rate 1979 (%)
Based on the 1979 Census

	Age-group	Female	Male
URBAN	6 - 9	91.8	90.0
	10 - 14	86.4	90.8
	15 - 19	33.5	33.3
	20 - 24	3.8	4.2
RURAL	6 - 9	60.9	66.1
	10 - 14	56.1	75.0
	15 - 19	23.6	37.1
	20 - 24	2.1	6.6

(Source: Asia Development Bank, Vocational Training and the Labour Market in Vanuatu 1987).

Table 3 gives some indication of schooling by region and by sex, again from the 1979 Census figures.

Table 3 Percentage of ni-Vanuatu aged 6 years and over who had attended School by Local Government Region, 1979

Percentage Attended School

Local Government Region	Male	Female	Total
Banks/Torres	72.0	54.5	63.3
Santo	66.3	59.1	63.1
Ambae/Maewo	83.7	74.7	79.5
Malekula	78.5	75.0	76.9
Pentecost	68.0	59.5	63.8
Ambrym	80.7	75.4	78.2
Paama	90.0	82.3	86.1
Epi	83.0	76.5	79.8
Shepherds	89.7	86.3	88.0
Efate	88.3	88.5	88.4
TAFEA	62.0	41.4	52.2
Vanuatu	75.5	67.3	71.6

Source- R Bedford (Ed) Population of Vanuatu Noumea 1989, p 92)

Table 4 illustrates the common phenomenon of high numbers of female teachers in government/administrative centres (here Port Vila on Efate). Educational expansion in the 1984-89 period on Santo/Malo and in TAFEA has resulted in many more women teachers being employed but it is interesting that the latter region still has twice as many male as female teachers.

Table 4 Numbers of Teachers by Region and by Sex

	FEMALE		MALE	
	1984	1989	1984	1989
Banks/Torres	15	11	31	31
Santo/Malo	57	100	66	80
Ambae / Maewo	41	29	53	59
Malekula	74	68	94	112
Pentecost	32	50	33	41
Ambryn	16	14	41	43
Paama	4	4	18	14
Epi	10	8	23	23
Tongoa/Shepherds	13	12	33	27
Efate	83	100	77	71
TAFEA	19	63	56	117
TOTAL	364	459	525	618

(Based on figures supplied by the Ministry of Education)

c. Primary Perceptions

The survey was conducted in a range of Primary 6 anglophone and francophone classes on three of the islands of Vanuatu: Efate, Espiritu Santo and Tanna. The urban samples were taken in Port Vila, the capital. The age-range was 8-15 years and altogether there were 112 girls and 115 boys involved.

A very high proportion of children help in the "gardens" (subsistence farms) in Vanuatu; only 5 per cent were never involved. Girls and boys appear to contribute equally in "garden" work, in fetching water and in going to market/shopping but the contribution of girls is greater (and statistically significant) in tasks such as caring for younger siblings, cooking, sweeping and laundry. The pupils generally agreed (93 per cent) that girls do help more at home than boys. Interestingly, despite the high involvement of ni-Vanuatu children in helping their parents, the percentage agreeing that they sometimes could not come to school because they had to do jobs for their mothers or fathers was one of the lowest in the survey (23 per cent). Many of the rural schools in Vanuatu are boarding establishments because of problems of distance and inaccessibility and it would seem that this factor may be instrumental in ensuring attendance during the week, even if not in promoting enrolment in the first place.

Over a third of the children thought that boys stayed on longer at school than girls and again a third thought that girls did not need to go to school as much as boys. Overall 18 per cent agreed that "Girls don't really need to go to school", but as in other measures of attitude, there were differences between the responses from the urban and the rural schools: only 11 per cent agreed in Port Vila but 20-24 per cent agreed in rural locations on other islands. Nevertheless, only Jamaica showed more positive attitudes than Vanuatu on this item.

Vanuatu has the highest percentage in the survey of children agreeing that they thought they would be leaving school at the end of the year and the lowest percentage saying that they would like to go to secondary school. Again there is an urban/rural difference within the overall figures and this again correlates with the literacy levels of the parents as perceived by the children.

The pupils themselves belong to relatively large families (58 per cent with 4-6 children and 30 per cent with 7 or more). However, the low number of children stating an intention to marry was startling. Whilst 80-90 per cent of respondents in other countries intended to marry, in Vanuatu (with the exception of one school) only 30-40 per cent planned to do so. Perhaps as the average age of marriage is relatively high, such an eventuality has less reality for a Primary 6 pupil in Vanuatu than it does elsewhere. Rural pupils planned to have larger families than did urban ones but boys, and rural boys in particular, planned to have more children, especially male children, than did the girls. The rural boys also had more negative attitudes towards girls' education, as one might expect.

Overall in the results of the survey there is a strong contrast between pupils in Port Vila and those in rural schools, especially those on other islands. The female pupils in Port Vila are expected to stay at school longer, and indeed it is accepted that they need to go to school as much as boys. Their mothers are twice as likely to be literate as mothers in rural areas on other islands. More of the girls in Port Vila expect to continue into secondary education. Their ambitions are higher and much more varied than those of their rural counterparts and they expect, like their mothers, to have fewer children when they marry. The situation for girls in rural areas appears to be more constrained by traditional attitudes.

The answers below are those of Rosina who is 12 years old and lives in a very rural and inaccessible part of Espiritu Santo. She is the third child in a family of seven and her parents are subsistence farmers. Rosina works in the "garden" every day and helps to prepare food. Her teacher considers her to be good at her schoolwork.

8. Que penses-tu des phrases suivantes? Tu es d'accord ou pas d'accord?

☑ D'ACCORD (C'est vrai!)
☒ PAS D'ACCORD (C'est faux!)

1. Les filles aident plus que les garçons à la maison	☑	☐
2. Généralement les garçons restent à l'école plus d'années que les filles	☑	☐
3. Aller à l'école est aussi important pour les filles que pour les garçons	☑	☐
4. Généralement les filles sont plus jeunes que les garçons quand elles quittent l'école	☑	☐
5. Ma mère est très attachée à ce que je vienne à l'école	☑	☐
6. En fait, les filles n'ont pas vraiment besoin d'aller à l'école	☑	☐
7. Quelquefois je ne peux pas venir à l'école parce que je dois aider mon père ou ma mère	☐	☒
8. Ça coûte très cher d'aller à l'école	☑	☐
9. J'aimerais bien que l'école soit plus près de la maison	☑	☐
10. Mon père est très attaché à ce que je vienne à l'école	☑	☐
11. Je pense que ma mère sait bien lire et écrire	☐	☒
12. Je pense que mon père sait bien lire et écrire	☐	☒
13. Je pense que je vais quitter l'école à la fin de l'année	☐	☒
14. J'aimerais continuer l'école l'année prochaine	☑	☐
15. C'est difficile de venir à l'école tous les jours	☐	☒
16. Je voudrais bien aller au collège	☑	☐
17. J'aime l'école	☑	☐

9. QUAND JE SERAI GRAND ......

Quand je serai grand, j'aimerais être une maitresse

Je voudrais me marier OUI [✓ NON]

Je voudrais avoir 0 enfants :

0 garçons 0 filles

B. FACTORS

i. Geographical

The geographical factor is significant in Vanuatu as might be expected. Enrolment levels vary from island to island but generally decline from the core (Vila) to the outer islands (exhibiting a "core-periphery" pattern). Banks and Torres to the north and TAFEA*, to the south are the furthest from the centre and have the lowest enrolments overall and the lowest figures for girls. There is also however the question of remoteness and accessibility within each island: isolated, traditional villages in the interior have a different attitudes towards the role and status of women and the education of girls from those on the coast. Groups moving down to the coast from the interior to settle are making a choice about modernity and formal education.

Vanuatu exhibits striking diversity in the differences between urban and rural areas and as 82% of the population lives in scattered rural locations, this affects a large part of the female school-age population. In parts of rural Santo for example, only 50% of the potential school population are recruited. Attitudes to girls' education are significantly different in the more rural areas, families are larger and access to school is more difficult.

This latter factor has been tackled by having feeder infant primary schools at local level with a junior primary (at P4, P5 or P6 level) receiving pupils as weekly boarders. Even so, rain or rough sea crossings from off-shore islands may still stop pupils getting to school on Mondays. The boarding factor solves some problems but there are implications when a child boards particularly when it is a girl: the production and help it would normally give in the household and "garden" (subsistence farming plot) during the week is not available.

The quality of primary education is said to vary from island to island (partly according to past and present mission influence). Few proceed to secondary school from Banks and Torres, for example. Access to junior secondary education is limited and uneven and at upper secondary level, even more limited.

At secondary level, Malapoa College and the Lycée Louis Antoine de Bougainville with their central location and prestige act as magnets, while some Catholic parents go for Montmartre College.

Rural children in our survey had very limited ambitions and girls in particular were surprised to be asked what they would do when they grew up: subsistence farming and marriage were all that they expected. There is however considerable migration between villages and islands, and to the two urban centres Vila and Luganville (Santo). The male circular migration of the past is increasingly being superseded by permanent migration of the whole family to the towns and ambitions are rising. There is however little migration overseas.

* TAFEA is the acronym for the southern islands (Tanna, Anatom, Futuna, Erromango and Aniwe).

ii. Socio-Cultural

There is a great diversity of cultural traditions in Vanuatu but generally the status and power of women is low. Overall the system is patriarchal and only males can own land, be heads of family or chiefs, attend council and drink kava. A girl's traditional role in society is to help in the home and "garden", marry young and have children. She has far less importance than a boy, particularly in rural areas: symptomatically girls' ages are commonly reported as lower than in reality and those of boys as higher! The work of a girl in domestic and garden duties exceeds that of a boy and is therefore missed more if she goes to school. The tradition of early marriage has disappeared except in remoter areas and most girls now marry in their early twenties, so that female drop-out in Vanuatu is not closely related to marriage as in some countries. The system is however patrilocal on most islands and does involve the girls moving away, making her a poor investment for the family.

Bride-price and polygamy are still practised and in remoter custom villages, women live apart during menstruation. Fear of menstrual blood by men is still common on some islands. In these communities girls are far less likely to go to school than boys. Indeed, school and access to Bislama and English or French is seen by some girls as a means of escape from the traditional life-style.

There is a low incidence of extra marital or early pregnancy, but when it occurs it incurs societal displeasure, and for schoolgirls this means expulsion. There does not appear to be a significant problem of sexual harassment or abuse, and females can normally travel freely to school and college. There is no problem about girls boarding away from home. There is however a certain amount of domestic violence against women, often associated with drink on pay-day.

'Modern' female role models are not strongly developed, but are emerging in the business field such as in banking. Not surprisingly, there is a concentration of professional women in Vila. Some concern has been voiced in connection with discrimination involved in promotion to senior posts and award of scholarships. Traditionally females in Vanuatu did not speak in public but this no longer applies, though there is a legacy of a quieter style than that typical of males. Professional men are not keen on their wives catching them up in terms of qualifications, occupation and status. Despite the progress that is evident, activists do not accept that any fundamental change has occurred.

iii. Health

Fertility is high in Vanuatu, with an average of 5.1 surviving children per mother. Large families are found in both urban and rural locations but significantly more in the rural areas. Family size has implications for cost as far as schooling is concerned and also for early drop-out by girls to look after younger brothers and sisters. Women's mortality rate is higher than that of males and reflects the lower status, long reproductive cycle and heavy work load of ni-Vanuatu women.

Fear of AIDS, though not yet present in Vanuatu, is changing attitudes to sex. Secondary school heads run unofficial awareness campaigns, but there is no official teaching or Ministry literature on the subject as a matter of principle. The Vanuatu Council of Women has organised a drive on health education, particularly in respect of nutrition and vaccination, for village women.

iv. Economic

Rural children in Vanuatu do contribute to production at an early age by the work they do in subsistence "gardens". There is value for parents in the work of girls in particular in the home and "garden" and this militates to some extent against them being sent to school. Our survey shows however that children who are at school are less likely to be absent because they are needed to do jobs at home than in most of the other countries in the survey. This is perhaps an advantage of boarding facilities at upper primary level for rural children.

In the event of families finding it difficult to pay school fees or incidental costs, it is likely to be the boys rather than the girls who are chosen to go to school. Girls after all are useful at home, leave the family on marriage, and will not necessarily attract a higher bride-price by being educated. However, parents, especially urban parents are beginning to perceive the economic benefit of educating their daughters who are obtaining employment in the modern sector. It is easier for an uneducated man to get a job than an uneducated woman.

Girls' ambitions are more circumscribed than boys' by socio-economic background and rural locations. In a typical rural school girls will express a wish to work in a "garden" or to be a teacher (their only role models being their mothers and teachers). The boys however will typically have more ideas: mechanic, doctor, sailor, pilot, policeman, driver, carpenter, etc. Even in Luganville girls' ambitions are limited to teaching, nursing and working in a bank. Career ambitions at 12 years of age have a fantasy quality of course but clearly show the difference in attitude between girls and boys, as we have seen in the Introduction.

In a small developing country there is an obvious political danger of producing an "over-educated" population for whom there are no jobs, but there is some desire expressed by the children in the survey for more access to secondary education.

v. Religious

Western religion is not a direct factor, but there is a disparity in respect of its general influence on educational provision from the differential aspect of various Christian missions. Indigenous religion, as part of kastom has an obvious influence on traditional attitudes towards females.

vi. Legal

The Family Law Bill, drafted under the auspices of the Vanuatu Council of Women, is largely concerned with marriage and divorce but has not passed into law. The legal age of marriage for girls is 18 but they still marry younger than that in remote, rural areas. Overall however, the average age is over 18 and the age of marriage is not a problem as far as girls' education is concerned.

Chiefs tend to retain traditional power and sanctions are locally applied if necessary. On islands such as Tanna a policeman's job is said to be a sinecure. This does mean however that rape and violence against women, for example, may be dealt with by customary law and punishment may as a result be more lenient than it might be.

vii. Political/Administrative

There is thought in some quarters to be discrimination against the francophone sector, and a questioning of regional considerations in selection and placement at secondary level. Neither of these factors affects girls only.

Some respondents felt that women's movements may to some extent be counter-productive but some progress is being made in local politics. The Vanuatu Council of Women trains women on how to organise and run meetings. Such a programme is very important in boosting the confidence of women as they have not traditionally been involved in decision making.

viii. Educational

There is a rapidly developing rash of kindergartens in Vanuatu which seems to be closely linked to enrolment in Primary 1. This may be encouraging the enrolment of girls. The figures for girls are lower than those for boys in rural areas and outer islands but progress is being made at a good rate. Primary education is not compulsory but is approaching full coverage in Viia, if not elsewhere.

There is no subject differentiation according to gender in the primary school, but neither it seem is there much awareness in curriculum development and materials production of the issue of gender bias. This is particularly important in a society where the girls have traditionally been held in low esteem - some still bow their heads when passing boys, even at secondary school. Parents still consider it more important for boys to repeat a class and to stay on at school: a girl who needs to repeat a year will often be withdrawn. The numbers of boys transferring to Primary 6 from feeder schools on Tanna by far exceed those for girls. Indeed 55% of the pupils surveyed in Tanna thought that girls did not need to go to school as much as boys. In Vila only 13% were of that opinion.

There are a limited number of places available for junior secondary education and children seem aware, judging from their answers in the survey, that few of them stand a chance of secondary education. The percentage expecting to leave school at the end of Primary 6 is the highest in the survey and the numbers wanting to go to secondary school the lowest. This may however be connected with the fact that for the vast majority going to secondary school would mean leaving home and boarding at the school.

There is no sex factor operating in selection procedures for secondary school but boys do seem to gain more places. Certainly boys are more assertive in the classroom, a point stressed by several interviewees and figuring quite strongly in survey responses. There is some gender stereotyping of options at upper secondary and higher education levels of the usual traditional views as to 'male' and 'female' fields of study/training.

ix. Initiatives

- Many initiatives in consciousness-raising and women's development are being organised by the Vanuatu Women's Council.
- Kindergartens are being developed by the private sector.
- Curriculum development schemes covering the whole of the primary curriculum with a view to uniting the anglophone and francophone sectors are underway.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our major recommendations (not necessarily in order of priority) would be:

i. a project to further encourage the emerging kindergarten schools might help to boost female confidence at an early age;

ii. that, where necessary, incentives be increased, such as provision of free uniforms, books and meals, so that economic constraints on female participation in schooling can be overcome;

iii an exercise aimed at raising gender-awareness and gender issues amongst pupils at school level might help to improve attitudes to girls' education in rural areas;

iv. an exercise might be considered to raise the level of gender awareness in the curriculum development and materials production units, through some form of INSET for the professionals involved;

v. positive incentives such as more secondary scholarships for girls might be considered to go along with the present expansion of junior secondary places;

vi. that support be considered for developing boarding facilities for secondary school pupils of both sexes;

vii. that initiatives be encouraged to develop technical and vocational education for both sexes;

viii. as school provision is irregular for historical reasons and the geography of the country makes for difficulties of access, a school mapping exercise with a view to informing future plans might enable universal access even if enrolment remained voluntary. We have noted however that in TAFEA, for example, there is low enrolment but plenty of schools.

ix. projects in agricultural training and modernisation focusing on subsistence farming and aimed at women;

x. that credible women's movements, with track records of support for women and girls in need, be identified and considered for aid;

xi. that efforts be made to raise the level of male awareness of the community and family benefits likely to arise from increased participation of women and girls in educational and income generating activity.

APPENDIX

THE CASE OF SEYCHELLES

(based on fieldwork conducted May - June 1996 by N K Cammish)

A. CONTEXT

a. General

The Republic of Seychelles is an archipelago, situated in the Indian Ocean about 1000 miles east of Mombasa. The islands lie between 4° - 5° south of the Equator, outside the monsoon belt, with temperatures ranging between 70° - 80° F, and with an average rainfall of 92" per annum. The central group of about 40 islands is granitic and the 50 outlying islands are coralline. Only four islands (Mahé, Praslin, La Digue & Silhouette) have a population of any size and permanence.

Seychelles gained its independence from Britain in June 1976. Settled first by the French in the late 18th century, it retained many aspects of French custom, law and culture during the period of British rule from 1814 onwards, not the least of which were the French language and a French-based creole spoken originally by the slaves brought from Mauritius & Reunion to work on the first plantations. The official languages are now Creole, English and French. The population, estimated at 75,305 in 1996, is 90% Roman Catholic and 8% Anglican, and is mainly descended from the original French settlers and their slaves with the addition of East Africans freed from slave-ships in the Indian Ocean after Abolition. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was a small influx of Indian and Chinese traders whose descendants constitute about 1% of the population. Since 1911 there has been no census of racial origins since extensive miscegenation has rendered such a task impossible even were it desirable.

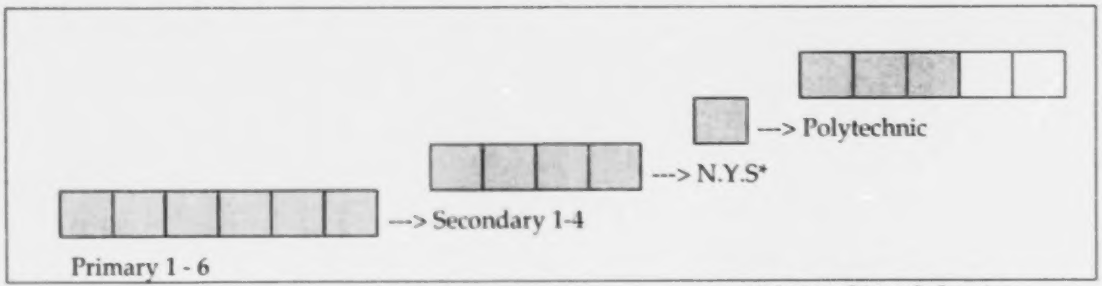
Despite limited resources with income coming mainly from tourism and fisheries, Seychelles has seen rapid development since Independence in housing provision and in access to electricity and treated water supplies (84% and 73% respectively, 1994 Census). Infant mortality has fallen to 8.8 infant deaths per thousand live births and life expectancy is 66 for men and 75 for women. 36% of the population are under 15 or over 65 years of age. Women constitute 51% of the total population and 44% of heads of households.

b. Education

Table 1 depicts the present system of education in Seychelles. The strong tradition of education for girls is reflected in the 1987 census figures for literacy (Table 2). The domination of the teaching profession by women is illustrated in Table 3.

Sex stereotyping in the choice of courses in the National Youth Service year can be seen in Table 4 and in the choice of 'A' level subjects at the Polytechnic in Table 5.

Table 1: The education system in Seychelles



*National Youth Service

Table 2: Population aged 12+ by literacy & sex, (Census 1987)

Literacy	Sex					
	Females	%	Males	%	Total	%
Not stated	170	1	268	1	438	1
Not approp.	4	0	1	0	5	0
No	3,363	13	3,836	16	7,179	14
Yes	21,770	86	20,691	83	42,461	85
Total	25,287	100	24,796		50,083	100

(Govt. of Seychelles, 1987 Census Report, Victoria, 1991, p. 97)

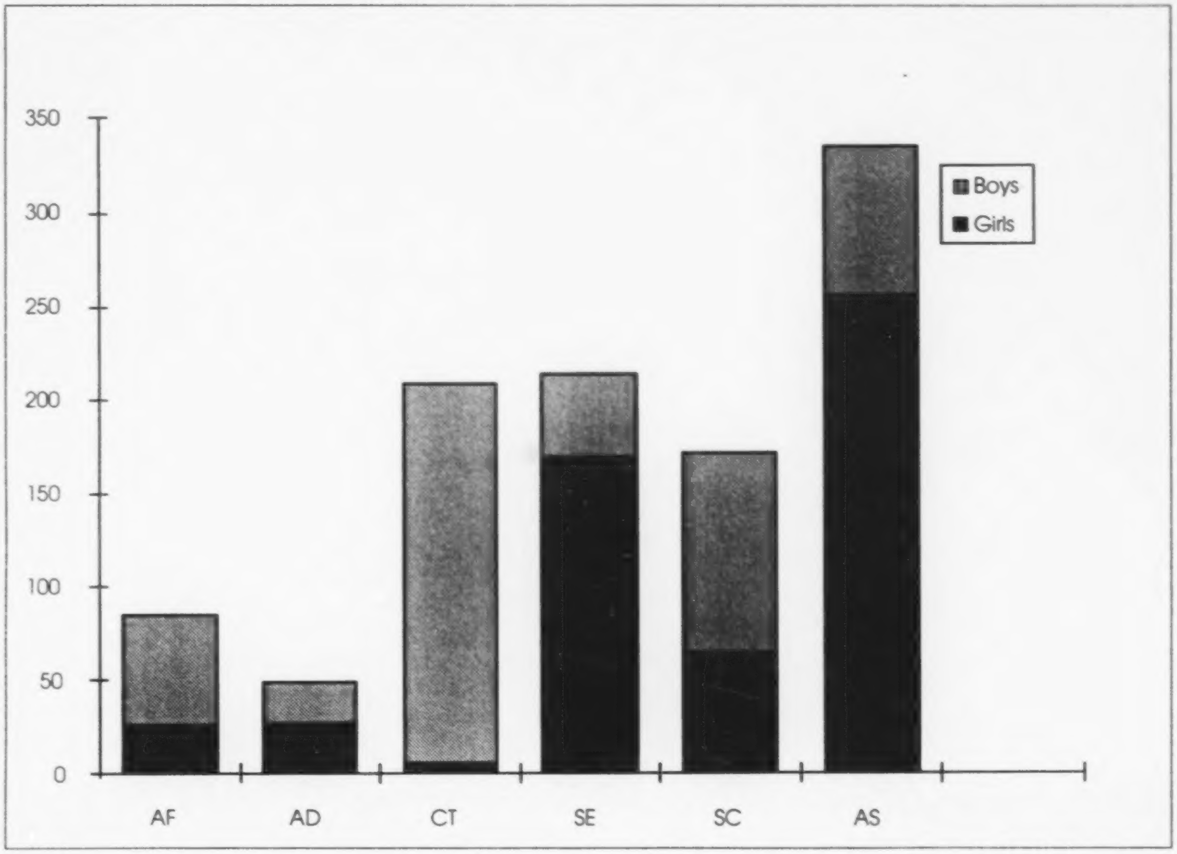
Table 3: Number of teachers by gender and nationality

	Local			Expatriate			Total	Total	Total
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	F/M
Creche	175	0	175	0	0	0	175	0	175
Primary	494	67	561	0	1	1	494	68	562
Secondary	202	137	339	37	36	73	239	173	412
NYS	25	47	72	11	26	37	36	73	109
Polytechnic	41	62	103	13	29	42	54	91	145
Total	937	313	1250	61	92	153	998	405	1403

(Ministry of Education & Culture, Educatio
Statistics, 1996, p. 5)

Table 4: NYS Channel Populations - 1995

SEX	AF	AD	CT	SE	SC	AS	Grand Total
Girls	26	27	5	169	64	257	548
Boys	58	22	203	45	108	78	514
Grand total	84	49	208	214	172	335	1062



AF	Agriculture & Fisheries Channel
AD	Art & Design Channel
CT	Construction/Technology Channel
SE	Social Economics Channel
SC	Science Channel
AS	Arts & Social Science Channel

(Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996)

Table 5:

1995 and 1996 'A' LEVEL ENTRIES
SEYCHELLES POLYTECHNIC
ANALYSIS BY SUBJECT and GENDER

	1995			1996	
	M	F		M	F
FRENCH	7	16		5	24
ENGLISH	10	23		10	30
HISTORY	3	4		4	8
GEOGRAPHY	5	6		7	22
ECONOMICS	7	10		11	12
MATHEMATICS	35	15		29	21
Syll. C	-	-		12	2
Further	-	-		7	1
CHEMISTRY	27	14		22	14
BIOLOGY	11	19		12	22
COMPUTING	5	1		14	7
PHYSICS	28	5		27	4
ART	-	-		5	4
Total Entries	138	113		165	171
Total Candidates	47	39		54	58

(based on figures supplied by the Ministry of Education and Culture, June 1996)

c. Primary Perceptions

The children surveyed were all in Primary 6: 86 boys and 91 girls in two rural and four urban locations. The urban schools were situated in and around Victoria; one rural school was in a relatively remote part of Mahé, the main island, and the other on La Digue, a quiet island with little development except for a few hotels for tourists. Annual promotion by age meant that all the pupils were in the 10-12 age group, 82.5% being 11 years old. Not many of their families were large (1-2 children 55.9%; 3-4 children 30%; 5-6 children 6.8%; over 6, 2.3%). Because schools have neighbourhood catchment areas, 75% of the pupils walked to school. In comparison with other countries surveyed, the percentage of mothers who worked outside the home was very high (81.4%), similar only to Jamaica. The mother was still however, the main carer (86%) although grandmothers, older sisters and aunts figured as second carer in many cases.

Despite the high proportion of working mothers, and although 14% of the children, mainly in the rural sample, said that they sometimes could not go to school because they had to help at home, many of the pupils surveyed were concerned only with sweeping (99.4% - every day or sometimes), washing the pots and going on errands to the shop. Half the boys and half the girls "never" helped with younger brothers & sisters. The girls were almost unanimous (92.3%) that they helped more than boys. Rural boys tended to agree with them but urban boys were split 50:50 over this. Certain tasks such as washing clothes were certainly more likely to be done by girls: 54% of boys never did the laundry but only 10% of girls never did it.

Both boys (83%) and girls (92%) rejected the idea that girls did not really need to go to school but it was interesting how many rejected the proposition that girls need to go to school as much as boys (boys 63%, girls 36%). A third of the children had the impression that girls were likely to leave school earlier than boys.

Their perceptions of their parents' abilities in reading and reading reflect the discrepancy between male and female literacy rates in Seychelles. Ten per cent of mothers were considered not to be "good" at reading and writing whilst the figure rose to 21% for fathers. Girls were harsher judges than boys.

As regards their futures, 26% rejected the idea of marriage, the rural girls being particularly wary. Overall 82% of boys were prepared to marry but only 64% of the girls. Despite the high illegitimacy rate in Seychelles and the custom of living *en ménage*, the pupils opted for combining having children with marriage to a statistically significant degree. The numbers of children they envisaged for themselves were usually in the range of 0-2 boys and 0-2 girls although rural boys wanted more sons.

Career ambitions followed a similar pattern to those found in our Jamaican survey: girls had a wide and interesting range of ideas including becoming a singer, detective, surgeon, vet, scientist, dentist, lawyer, immigration officer, journalist or artist, etc. as well as the more sex-stereotyped jobs such as teaching and secretarial work. Rural girls tended to opt more often for teaching and nursing but were attracted to opportunities in hotels where they existed: tourist guide, chambermaid or waitress. Only four boys thought of becoming teachers compared with twenty four girls, a measure of the domination of the teaching profession by women in Seychelles.

The survey overall reflects the dichotomy in girls' participation in education in Seychelles. At primary level they are ahead academically and have plenty of ambition but by the end of secondary education, as we shall see, they are increasingly opting for sex-stereotyped courses and are being over-taken by the boys.

B. FACTORS

i) Geographical

The isolation of small village communities and the resulting urban-rural dichotomy in the past has now been largely overcome, especially on Mahé and Praslin, the two main islands, by the up-grading of the infrastructure over the last twenty years: roads and local transport have been greatly improved. In addition, a system of zoning for primary schools means that the majority of children have relatively easy access to school at this level. In our survey, 75% of the pupils went to school on foot. Provision of secondary education is also de-centralised. In any case, education at primary and secondary levels is compulsory.

The National Youth Service Year overcomes problems of distance and accessibility by being residential and it is only after that, at Polytechnic level, that problems of access arise. Not only do students on Mahé often have a long way to travel but both boys and girls on the islands of Praslin and La Digue who wish to attend the Polytechnic actually have to move to Mahé. The 1994 National Report on the Situation of Women in Seychelles suggests that a Youth Hostel should be built to enable more girls from the other islands to continue their education at the Polytechnic. This is especially important in view of the increasing number of teenage pregnancies in Seychelles.

The small population of Seychelles cannot support an educational system beyond 'A' level, vocational training, and teacher training. Higher education has to be pursued overseas. It is at this point that the difference in access for males and females widens dramatically. The figures for overseas training in 1994 show 43 females and 85 males following pre-service courses and 50 females and 67 males doing in-service courses.

ii) Socio-cultural

The family in Seychelles has been described as matrifocal or matricentric, the father having a somewhat peripheral position in the domestic unit, particularly in the lower socio-economic groups. Although the ideal is marriage, (as reflected in pupils' answers in our survey) *de facto* unions which have neither religious nor legal sanctions (known as living *en ménage*) are common in Seychelles. Births are registered by birth status as being nuptial, acknowledged or other. In 1994 for example, there were 1,700 births, of which 398 were to married couples; 787 were "recognised" by the father, and 515 were not. Traditionally, in poorer families at subsistence level, the woman controlled the money because she was in control of buying the food. The mother was a responsible figure, in a central position concerning the control of resources allocated through the household and also ultimately responsible for the children. Sociological studies suggest that Seychellois men traditionally were often seen as rather feckless in comparison, spending money on drink and their friends as a sign of male status. These traditions, added to the impermanence of many *en ménage* relationships, have meant that Seychellois women are more used to responsibility, decision-making, handling money, and working outside the home than women in many of the other countries surveyed and this accounts at least in part for the extensive use they have made of educational opportunities ever since the first schools were opened in the mid nineteenth century. The 1981-82 Census for example, shows more girls than boys in each of the age groups 12-20 pursuing full-time education although it can be argued that there were more job opportunities for boys in agriculture and fishing so that boys left school and girls stayed on. The evidence of a long history of girls' achievements in primary education and higher literacy levels is reminiscent of Jamaica, along with similar problems of lower motivation, sex-stereotyped choice of options and early pregnancy once the girls reach adolescence. In the past girls would often drop out of school in order to care for younger siblings at home but this problem has been almost completely eradicated by the establishment of a large scale system of crèches over the last twenty years. Many interviewees stressed this point.

iii) Health

Health does not appear to be a significant factor in girls' participation in education except for the problem of teenage pregnancy. In 1996 the situation was still that of girls having to withdraw from the educational system when pregnant but suggestions were being made that alternative provision for schooling might be established.

iv) Economic

Originally a plantation economy, and today copying with problems such as the costs of smallness and changing priorities in international aid, the Seychelles has nevertheless seen a big increase in employment since the early eighties. The 1987 Census shows women more predominant in tourism related work and in secretarial, domestic and social services. The two largest occupation groups were hotel-workers (chambermaids and cleaners) and teachers. The Seychelles National Gender Unit comments that women in general are still not equitably represented in the labour force. Despite the fact that they have a higher literacy rate than men, they still tend to have less prestigious and lower-paying jobs or ones which have traditionally been seen as extensions of their domestic role and functions. With equal opportunities in education and considerable national investment in education, training, health and the social services made to improve their position, nevertheless 48.5% of women are still economically inactive and 53% of skilled job seekers are women (1991 figures).

High teenage fertility rates force girls to drop out of school to look after the children and women who are heads of households with children can often only work part-time or in casual jobs. Low marketable skills and the many responsibilities faced by many women as single parents and heads of households appear to be among the main factors holding women back.

v) Religion

The missions of both the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches in the Seychelles have always been very supportive of education for girls, ever since St. Joseph's Convent School for Girls was established in 1861. All the mission schools founded throughout Seychelles in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were either mixed or had a girls' school along side the one for boys. Although on can smile wryly at the compliment intended by the Director of Education in his report in 1938 when he said - "As one has come to expect from all Convent Schools throughout the Colonies, excellent needlework is done", there is a strong tradition in Seychelles, still active today, of girls working hard at school and being more literate than their brothers. Primary schools, even those for boys, have usually been staffed by women, partly because this was easier when the schools were run by nuns. The 1943 Regulations for Catholic primary schools list rules of conduct for school-mistresses and make no mention at all of school-masters. Teaching is seen today as a largely female profession and the female ethos of the primary schools is held accountable by many interviewees for the under-achievement of boys, if not for the good performance of girls. Although the schools are no longer run by the missions, the factor of religion has had a strong influence on girls' participation in education and through the churches' encouragement of women to become teachers, has opened up opportunities for them in terms of status and earnings.

vi) Legal

Equality of opportunity in education and training is part of a comprehensive set of rights in Seychelles under the constitution and other laws. In practice inequalities do still persist, despite the efforts of legislators to provide the social protection for women and their children which must underlie any attempt at providing equality of opportunity. As in some of the other case-studies in this report, traditional attitudes and practices may militate against adolescent girls fulfilling the promise they demonstrate so ably in the primary school, despite the legal rulings.

vii) Politico-Administrative

Over the last twenty years there has been strong political encouragement for equality of opportunity for girls and women as can be seen in efforts such as the creation of crèches and the involvement of women in local political activities. Women are represented at all levels of government including the ministerial and a National Gender Unit has been established. The Government's Gender Strategy is articulated in the Human Resource Development Programme and includes the developing of programmes to ensure for example the availability of gender disaggregated data and information and effective career guidance.

viii) Education

Within the education system itself, which provides free and unsegregated opportunities at all levels, there are however factors which affect both boys' and girls' participation. Erroll Miller's phrase "the marginalisation of the black male" springs to mind when one looks at the primary level of education.

Primary schools are staffed largely by women. In 1996 there were only three male Headteachers to twenty-nine females and only 7 out of 47 Directors of Studies were male. In the schools in our survey, Primary I-IV classes were taught entirely by women; a few men taught in Primary V and VI (where there is some semi-specialisation), often in the areas of mathematics, science & craft.

Just as women dominate among the teachers, so do the girls dominate in the classroom. As soon as streaming starts in Primary 3/4, the top streams are full of girls and the boys predominate in the bottom groups. The figures for one school in the survey tabled below are typical:

PRIMARY THREE CLASSES: SAMPLE URBAN SCHOOL

STREAM	GIRLS	BOYS
A	25	8
B	23	11
C	12	22
D	13	22
E	10	15

In Primary 6 in the same school there were 2 girls and 22 boys in one bottom set and 7 girls and 20 boys in the other. A rural school with similar figures at primary level found that the pattern also continued into the secondary classes.

The female ethos is also apparent where parents are concerned. Headteachers said that it is the mothers who are most involved. It is the mothers who come in to school, who serve on committees and who are the initiators and organisers.

Causes of strong female participation in education at primary level are seen to include:

- the availability of places and strong enrolment and attendance procedures.
- the accessibility of schools which is good because of zoning and the provision of transport where necessary.
- the low costs for parents: education is free & so were lunches until recently - even now they are very cheap.
- pre-school provision is good: crèches in all districts mean that girls are not kept off school to look after younger siblings.

It was however stressed by interviewees that in the past when there were fees and transport costs to pay, parents did not usually discriminate against girls where school was concerned. If they could not pay, both boys and girls left.

Female enrolment at primary, secondary and polytechnic level is on average equal to that of boys. The problem area as far as girls are concerned starts with option choices in the secondary school, in the National Youth Service Year and at the Polytechnic. The sex-stereotyped choices (see Tables 4 and 5, p. 90-91) affect later career options, vocational training and higher education.

Beyond 'A' level, women are very much in the minority apart from in teacher-training. Academic and professional courses at tertiary level are taken up mainly by males: females constitute only one third of this group. In addition there are very limited opportunities of re-entry for those girls and women who drop out of the education system at an earlier point.

ix. Initiatives

There are many initiatives at all levels to develop awareness of gender issues in education. As far as girls are concerned, future developments are seen to lie in the area of the actual range of options at secondary and polytechnic level (as well as in stereotyped choices), and in the encouragement of girls to go on into higher education. Interestingly however, as in Jamaica, there is also the problem of boys' performance in the primary school which needs to be addressed.

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